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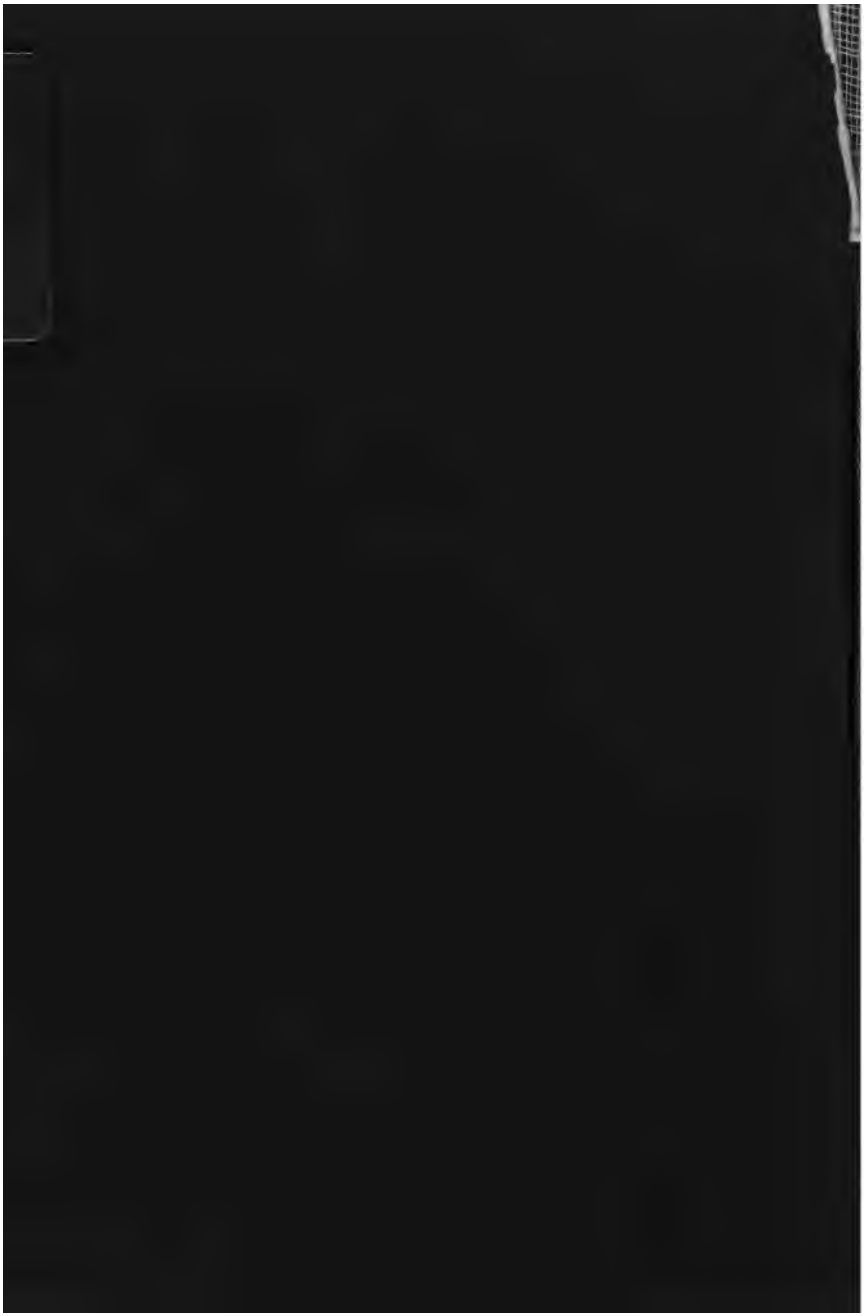
Sanford Treasures.



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2. " , American — "

Garnered Treasures.

Garnered Treasures

FROM THE POETS.

NOT the least among the blessings,
  Which around our pathway throng,
Lifting us above earth's level,
  Is the poet's gift of song.

PHILADELPHIA:
FRIENDS' BOOK ASSOCIATION,
76 Arch Street.
1878.

THE NEW YORK
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PREFACE.

THE readers of Friends' Intelligencer have so often expressed their appreciation of the poetry which has from time to time appeared in its columns, that the editors have been induced to collect into a volume some of its best original and selected pieces.

They do not assume that this collection is superior in poetic merit to many that have preceded it; but it contains some original poetry of simple beauty, and nothing, they believe, at variance with a pure and healthful religious sentiment.

It is offered in the hope that it may prove acceptable to many households.

The names or initials of the authors are not always given, having been omitted when previously published, and it was found impossible to supply this deficiency in all cases.

WQR 19FEB'36

Garnered Treasures.

FROM

WHITTIER'S "QUESTIONS OF LIFE."

WHY idly seek from outward things
The answer inward silence brings;
Why stretch beyond our proper sphere
And age, for that which lies so near?
Why climb the far-off hills with pain,
A nearer view of heaven to gain?
In lowliest depths of bosky dells
The hermit Contemplation dwells.
A fountain's pine-hung slope his seat,
And lotus twined his silent feet,
Whence, piercing heaven, with screenéd sight,
He sees at noon the stars, whose light
Shall glorify the coming night.

Here let me pause, my quest forego;
Enough for me to feel and know

That He, in whom the cause and end
The past and future meet and blend,—
Who, girt with His immensities,
One vast and star-hung system sees,
Small as the clustered Pleiades,—
Moves not alone the heavenly quires,
But waves the spring-time's grassy spires,
Guards not archangels' feet alone,
But deigns to guide and keep my own;
Speaks not alone the words of fate
Which worlds destroy and worlds create,
But whispers in my spirit's ear,
In tones of love, or warning fear,
A language none beside may hear.
To Him, from wanderings long and wild,
I come, an over-wearied child,
In cool and shade His peace to find,
Like dew-fall settling on my mind.
Assured that all I know is best,
And humbly trusting for the rest,
I turn from fancy's cloud-built scheme,
Dark creed and mournful eastern dream
Of power, impersonal and cold,
Controlling all, itself controlled,
Maker and slave of iron laws,
Alike the subject and the cause;

From vain philosophies that try
The sevenfold gates of mystery,
And baffled ever, babble still,
Word-prodigal, of fate and will;
From Nature, and her mockery, Art,
And book and speech of men apart,
To the still Witness in my heart;
With reverence waiting to behold
His Avatár of love untold,
The Eternal Beauty new and old.

WHO SHALL ROLL AWAY THE STONE?

"And they said among themselves, 'Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?' And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away."—MARK xvi. 3, 4.

WHAT poor weeping ones were saying
Eighteen hundred years ago,
We, the same weak faith betraying,
Say in our sad hours of woe;
Looking at some trouble lying
In the dark and dread unknown,
We, too, often ask with sighing,
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

Thus with care our spirits crushing,
When they might from care be free,
And in joyous song outgushing,
Rise, with rapture, Lord, to Thee—
For before the way was ended,
Oft we've had with joy to own,
Angels have from Heaven descended,
And have rolled away the stone.

Many a storm-cloud sweeping o'er us,
Never pours on us its rain;
Many a grief we see before us,
Never comes to cause us pain;
Ofttimes in the feared to-morrow
Sunshine comes—the cloud has flown—
Ask not then in foolish sorrow,
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

Burden not thy soul with sadness,
Make a wiser, better choice;
Drink the wine of life with gladness—
God doth bid thee, man, rejoice.
In to-day's bright sunshine basking,
Leave to-morrow's fears alone;
Spoil not present joys by asking,
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

WHEN the new years come and the old years go,
How, little by little, all things grow!
All things grow—and all decay—
Little by little passing away.
Little by little, on fertile plain,
Ripen the harvests of golden grain,
Waving and flashing in the sun,
When the summer at last is done.
Little by little they ripen so,
As the new years come and the old years go.

Low on the ground an acorn lies,
Little by little it mounts to the skies,
Shadow and shelter for wandering herds,
Home for a hundred singing birds.
Little by little the great rocks grew,
Long, long ago, when the world was new;
Slowly and silently, stately and free,
Cities of coral under the sea
Little by little are builded—while so
The new years come and the old years go.

Little by little all tasks are done;
So are the crowns of the faithful won,
So is heaven in our hearts begun.
With work and with weeping, with laughter and play
Little by little, the longest day
And the longest life are passing away;
Passing without return—while so
The new years come and the old years go.

GRADATIM.

HEAVEN is not reached by a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

I can count these things to be grandly true;
That a noble deed is a step towards God—
Lifting the soul from the common sod
To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under our feet,
By what we have mastered of greed and gain,
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ill that we hourly meet.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we trust,
When the morning calls to life and light,
But our hearts grow weary, and ere the night
Our lives are trailing the sordid dust.

Wings for the angels, but feet for men!
We must borrow the wings to find the way—
We may hope, and resolve, and aspire, and pray,
But our feet must rise or we fall again.

Only in dreams is the ladder thrown
From the weary earth to the sapphire walls;
But the dreams depart, and the vision falls,
And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached by a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

J. C. HOLLAND.

THE HOLY NAME.

'Tis said when pious Moslems walk abroad,
If on the path they spy a floating bit
Of paper, reverently they turn aside
And shun the scrap, nor set a foot on it,
Lest haply thereupon the awful name
Of mighty Allah should by chance be writ.

We smile at the vain dread; but blind and dull
The soul that only smiles, and cannot see
A thought of perfect beauty folded in
The zealot's reverent fear, as in some free
And flaunting flower-cup may be hived and held
One drop of precious honey for the bee.

Small wind-blown things there are, which any day
Float by in air or on our pathway lie,
Swift-winged moments speeding on their way;
Brief opportunities, which we pass by
Heedless and smiling, little subtle threads
Of influence—intimations soft and sly.

Careless we tread them down, as pressing on,
Our eager inconsiderate feet we set
On the unvalued treasures where they lie.

We are too blind to prize or to regret,
Too dull to recognize the mystic name
Graven upon them as on an amulet.

Ah! dears, let us no longer do this thing,
And thus the sweeter life lose and let fall;
But with anointed eyes and reverent feet
Pass on our way, noting and prizing all,
Knowing that God's great token-sign is set
Not on the large things only, but the small.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

THE IDEAL IS THE REAL.

MEN take the pure ideals of their souls,
And lock them fast away,
And never dream that things so beautiful
Are fit for every day.
So, counterfeits pass current in their lives,
And stones they give for bread;
And starvingly and fearingly they walk
Through life among the dead;
Though never yet was pure ideal
Too fair for them to make their real.

The thoughts of beauty dawning on the soul
Are glorious Heaven-gleams,
And God's eternal truth lies folded deep
In all man's lofty dreams!
'Twas first in Thought's clear world that Kepler saw
What ties the planets bound,
And through long years he searched the spheres, and there
The answering law he found!
Men said he sought a wild ideal,
The stars made answer, "It is real."

Paul, Luther, Howard, all the crowned ones,
Who starlike gleam through time,
Lived boldly out before the clear-eyed sun,
Their inmost thought sublime.
These truths, to them more beautiful than day,
They knew would quicken men,
And deeds at which the blinded gazers sneered,
They dared to practice then;
Till those who mocked their young ideal,
In meekness owned it was the real.

Thine early dreams, which came in "shapes of light,"
Came bearing prophecy—

Commissioned sweetly to unfold
Thy possible to thee.
Fear not to build thine eyrie in the heights,
Bright with celestial day;
And trust thyself unto thine inmost soul,
In simple faith alway.
And God will make divinely real
The highest forms of thine ideal.

ANN PRESTON.

"JUST SIXTY-TWO."

JUST sixty-two! Then trim thy light,
And get thy jewels all re-set;
'Tis past meridian, but bright,
And lacks one hour to sunset yet.
At sixty-two
Be strong and true;
Clear off thy rust, and shine anew.

'Tis yet high time; thy staff resume,
And fight fresh battles for the truth;
For what is age but youth's full bloom,—
A riper, more transcendant youth?
A wedge of gold
Is never old;
Streams broader grow as downward rolled.

At sixty-two is life begun;
At seventy-three begin once more;
Fly swifter as you near the sun,
And brighter shine at eighty-four;
At ninety-five,
Should'st thou arrive,
Still wait on God, and work and thrive.

Keep thy locks wet with morning dew,
And freely let thy graces flow;
For life well spent is ever new,
And years anointed younger grow.
So work anew;
Be young for aye;
From sunset breaking into day.

BLESSEDNESS.

It is not happiness I seek,
Its name I hardly dare to speak;
It is not made for man or earth,
And Heaven alone can give it birth.

There is a something sweet and pure,
Through life, through death it may endure;
With steady foot I onward press,
And long to win that Blessedness.

It hath no shadow, this soft light,
But makes each daily duty bright;
It bids each heart-born tumult cease,
And sobers joy to quiet peace.

An all-abiding sense of Love,
In silence falling from above,
A conscience clear from willful sin,
That hath no subterfuge within;

Fixed duty claiming every power,
And human love to charm each hour,—
These, these, my soul, make Blessedness;
I ask no more, I seek no less.

And yet I know these are too much;
My very being's life they touch;
Without them all, oh, let me still
Find Blessedness in God's dear will.

LOUISA J. HALL.

THE "LITTLE WHILE."

What is this he saith, "A little while?"

Oh, for the peace that floweth like a river,
Making life's desert places bloom and smile!
Oh, for the faith to grasp heaven's bright "forever,"
Amid the shadows of earth's "little while!"

"A little while" for patient vigil-keeping,
To face the stern, to wrestle with the strong;
"A little while" to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song.

"A little while" to wear the robe of sadness,
To toil with weary steps through miry ways,
Then to pour forth the fragrant oil of gladness,
And clasp the girdle round the robe of praise.

"A little while" 'midst shadow and confusion,
To strive by faith love's mysteries to spell;
Then read each dark enigma's bright solution,
Then hail sight's verdict, "He doeth all things well."

"A little while" the earthen pitcher taking
To wayside brooks, from far-off fountains fed;
Then the cool lip, its thirst forever slaking,
Beside the fulness of the Fountain-head.

"A little while" to keep the oil from failing,
"A little while" faith's flickering lamp to trim;
And then the Bridegroom's coming footsteps hailing,
To haste to meet him, with the bridal hymn.

And He, who is himself the Gift and Giver,
The future glory and the present smile,
With the bright promise of the glad "forever,"
Will light the shadows of the "little while."

J. CREWDSON.

THE PETRIFIED FERN.

IN a valley, centuries ago,
Grew a little fern leaf, green and slender—
Veining delicate, and fibres tender—
Waving, when the wind crept down so low;
Rushes tall, and moss, and grass grew round it,
Playful sunbeams darted in and found it,
Drops of dew stole in, by night, and crowned it,
But no foot of man e'er trod that way;
Earth was young, and keeping holiday.

Monster fishes swam the silent main,
Stately forests waved their giant branches,
Mountains hurled their snowy avalanches,
Mammoth creatures stalked across the plain;

Nature revelled in grand mysteries,
But the little fern was not of these;
Did not number with the hills and trees;
Only grew and waved, its sweet wild way,—
No one came to note it, day by day.

Earth, one time, put on a frolic mood,
Heaved the rocks, and changed the mighty motion
Of the deep, strong currents of the ocean,
Moved the plain, and shook the haughty wood,
Crushed the little fern in soft, moist clay,
Covered it, and hid it safe away.
O, the long, long centuries since that day!
O, the agony! O, life's bitter cost,
Since that useless little fern was lost!

Useless? Lost? There came a thoughtful man,
Searching Nature's secrets, far and deep:
From a fissure in a rocky steep
He withdrew a stone, o'er which there ran
Fairy pencillings, a quaint design,
Veinings, leafage, fibres clear and fine,
And the fern's life lay in every line!
So, I think, God hides some souls away,
Sweetly to surprise us, the last day.

M. B. BRANCH.

EXPRESSIVE SILENCE.

SACRED silence! all thy power
Have we ever known?
No! we lavish upon language
Praise that is thy own.

Thought is silent, in its dwelling
Deep within the breast;
Speech is but the outward clothing
In which thought is drest.

Speech is but the upper current
Of a deep, deep sea;
Far below, in sacred silence,
Must the treasure be.

Calmness, coolness, dwell with silence;
Silent falls the dew;
Silent roll the stars above us
In the unfathomed blue.

Silent worship! not the body,
But the soul that stands
With bowed head and ear attentive,
For its Lord's commands.

Silent suffering! loud lamenting
Never has thy power;
Silent sympathy! no other
Fits the darkest hour.

Silent gratitude! when language
Vainly strives to tell
All the sense of good accepted,
Silence speaks it well.

Mute submission! meekly bowing
'Neath the Eternal will;
"I was dumb, because thou didst it,"
Is its language still.

Silent joy! to give it utterance
Music has no tone;
When 'tis deepest, purest, holiest,
It is all our own.

What can still the voice of slander
Like the mute reply?
Love to slanderer and slandered
Speaking in the eye.

Is the spirit moved to anger
By another's speech?
Silent mastery of passion
Best his heart will reach.

Silent vigils! silent prayers!
O, how they ascend
From the sad and anxious watchers,
By the couch they tend.

And like vapor heavenward tending,
They may fall in showers,
Making parched and barren deserts
Cheerful with spring flowers.

Mingling with the crowds around us,
As we pass them by,
We can give but friendly greeting,
And the kind reply.

But the hand in hand companions,
Journeying side by side,
Toward the one eternal city,
Loving, true, and tried,

Why should these be ever feeding
Upon words alone,
When the heart's most precious feeling
Is to each unknown?

Ah, how many social gatherings,
Were we simply true,
Would enrich and bless our spirits
More than now they do.

Thought and speech would flow together,
And when these were not,
Silence, like the heavenly manna,
Would refresh the thought.

We should often feel at parting,
That a Heavenly Guest,
Known by breaking bread amongst us,
Had our gathering blest.

S.

THE CRUSE THAT FAILETH NOT.

Is THY cruse of comfort wasting? Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine, it shall serve thee and thy brother;
Love divine will fill thy storehouse, or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one, will often make a royal feast for two.

For the heart grows rich in giving; all its wealth is living grain;
Seeds, which mildew in the garner, scattered, fill with gold the plain.

Is thy burden hard and heavy? Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden; God will bear both it and thee.

Numb and weary on the mountains, wouldst thou sleep amidst the snow?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee, and together both shall glow.
Art thou stricken in life's battle? Many wounded round thee moan;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsam, and that balm shall heal thine own.

Is the heart a well left empty? None but God its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless fountain can its ceaseless longing still.
Is the heart a living power? Self-entwined, its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving, and by serving love will grow.

H.

HYMN FROM THE GERMAN.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
Our God is good, in every place
His love is known, His help is found,
His mighty arm and tender grace
Bring good from ills that hem us round.
Easier than we think can He
Turn to joy our agony.
Soul, remember, 'mid thy pains
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
Say, shall He slumber, shall He sleep,
Who gave the eye its power to see?
Shall He not hear His children weep,
Who made the ear so wondrously?
God is God: He sees and hears
All their troubles, all their tears.
Soul, forget not, 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
He who can earth and heaven control,
Who spreads the clouds o'er sea and land,
Whose presence fills the mighty whole,
In each true heart is close at hand.
Love Him, He will surely send
Help and joy that never end.
Soul, remember, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
Scarce canst thou bear thy cross? Then fly
To Him where only rest is sweet;
Thy God is great, His mercy nigh,
His strength upholds the tottering feet.
Trust Him, for His grace is sure,
Ever does His truth endure;
Soul, forget not, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
O, my soul, despair thou never!
When sin and follies long forgot
Upon thy tortured conscience prey,

O, come to God, and fear Him not,
His love shall sweep them all away.
Pains of Hell at look of His,
Change to calm content and bliss.
Soul, forget not in thy pain,
God o'er all doth ever reign.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
Those whom the thoughtless world forsakes,
Who stand bewilder'd with their woe,
God gently to His bosom takes,
And bids them all His fulness know.
In thy sorrow's swelling flood
Own His hand who seeks thy good.
Soul, forget not, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
Let earth and heaven, outworn with age,
Sink to the chaos whence they came;
Let angry foes against us rage,
Let hell shoot forth his fiercest flame;
Fear not Death, nor Satan's thrusts,
God defends who in Him trusts;

Soul, remember, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
What though thou tread, with bleeding feet,
A thorny path of grief and gloom,
Thy God will choose the way most meet
To lead thee heavenwards, lead thee home.
For this life's long night of sadness
He will give thee peace and gladness.
Soul, forget not, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

ZIHN, 1682.

LEND A HELPING HAND.

LIFT a little! Lift a little!
Neighbor, lend a helping hand
To that heavy laden brother,
Who for weakness scarce can stand.
What to thee, with thy strong muscle,
Seems a light and easy load,
Is to him a ponderous burden,
Cumbering his pilgrim road.

Lift a little! Lift a little!
Effort gives one added strength;
That which staggers him at rising,
Thou canst hold at arm's full length.
Not *his* fault that he is feeble,
Not thy praise that thou art strong;
It is God makes lives to differ,
Some from wailing, some from song.

Lift a little! Lift a little!
Many they who need thy aid;
Many lying on the roadside,
'Neath misfortune's dreary shade.
Pass not by, like Priest and Levite,
Heedless of thy fellow-man;
But, with heart and arms extended,
Be the Good Samaritan.

HE SUPS WITH ME.

SPEECHLESS Sorrow sat with me;
I was sighing wearily!
Lamp and fire were out; the rain
Wildly beat the window-pane;
In the dark we heard a knock,
And a hand was on the lock;

One in waiting speaks to me!
Saying, sweetly,
"I am come to sup with thee."

All my room was dark and damp;
"Sorrow," said I, "trim the lamp.
Light the fire and cheer thy face,
Set the guest-chair in its place."
And again I heard the knock;
In the dark I found the lock:
"Enter, I have turned the key—
Enter, stranger
Who art come to sup with me!"

Opening wide the door, He came,
But I could not speak His name;
In the guest-chair took His place,
But I could not see His face.
When my cheerful fire was beaming,
When my little lamp was gleaming,
And the feast was spread for three,
Lo! my Master
Was the Guest that supped with me.

THE EVERLASTING LOVE.

"The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."—JER. xxxi, 3.

How TENDER is Thy love, O Lord!
How free and full the grace
That bids the poor and needy come,
And fearless seek Thy face;

To come to Thee, their Priest and King,
Without a fear or care—
Just as they are, in mean array,
And in Thy bounty share!

Not to the rich and great alone,
Of old, Thy servants went;
But into "lanes" and "highways," forth
Thy messengers Thou sent,

To bring the outcast wanderers in,
The poor, the lame, the blind;
For these the banquet Thou prepared,
The highest seats assigned.

With gracious words Thou welcomed them,
Clothed them in garments meet;

For those Thou'd chosen for Thy guests,
And bade with Thee to eat.

Well may their "joy be full," who thus
Have known Thy table spread
For them, and from Thy hand, O Lord,
Received the Heavenly bread;

Partaken of the oil and wine—
Known every want supplied;
And with th' "abundance of Thy house"
Been fully "satisfied."

To sup with Thee, O gracious One!
How honored they and blest,
Who know Thy loving favor, shown
As to a royal guest!

Such wondrous grace, so freely shown,
How can we e'er repay?
What gift can we, Thy little ones,
Upon Thy altar lay?

Thou hast done *all*, O King of saints,
And marvelous Thy ways;
To Thee be all the honor given,
The glory and the praise?

A. R. PAUL.

AN INVITATION TO THE COUNTRY.

ALREADY, close by our summer dwelling,
The Easter sparrow repeats her song;
A merry warbler, she chides the blossoms—
The idle blossoms that sleep so long.

The blue-bird chants from the elm's long branches,
A hymn to welcome the budding year;
The south wind wanders from field to forest,
And softly whispers, The spring is here.

Come, daughter mine, from the gloomy city,
Before those lays from the elm have ceased;
The violet breathes by our door as sweetly
As in the air of her native East.

Though many a flower in the wood is waking,
The daffodil is our door-side queen;
She pushes upward the sward already,
To spot with sunshine the early green.

No lays so joyous as these are warbled
From wiry prison in maiden's bower;
No pampered bloom of the green-house chamber
Has half the charm of the lawn's first flower.

Yet these sweet sounds of the early season,
And these fair sights of its sunny days,
Are only sweet when we fondly listen,
And only fair when we fondly gaze.

There is no glory in star or blossom,
Till looked upon by a loving eye;
There is no fragrance in April breezes,
Till breathed with joy as they wander by.

Come, Julia dear, for the sprouting willows,
The opening flowers and gleaming brooks,
And hollows, green in the sun, are waiting
Their dower of beauty from thy glad looks.

W. C. BRYANT.

MY CREED.

I HOLD that Christian grace abounds
Where charity is seen; that when
We climb to heaven, 'tis on the rounds
Of love to men.

I hold all else named piety
A selfish scheme, a vain pretense;
Where center is not, can there be
Circumference?

This I moreover hold, and dare
  Affirm where'er my rhyme may go:
Whatever things be sweet or fair,
  Love makes them so;

Whether it be the lullabies
  That charm to rest the nestling bird,
Or that sweet confidence of sighs,
  And blushes without word;

Whether the dazzling and the flush
  Of softly sumptuous garden bowers,
Or by some cabin-door or bush
  Of ragged flowers.

'Tis not the wide phylactery,
  Nor stubborn fast, or stated prayers,
That make us saints; we judge the tree
  By what it bears.

And when a man can live apart
  From work, on theologic trust,
I know the blood about his heart
  Is dry as dust.

ALICE CARY.

THE WIFE.

Not as all other women are
  Is she that to my soul is dear;
Her glorious fancies come from far,
Beneath the silver evening star;
  And yet her heart is ever near.

Great feelings hath she of her own,
  Which lesser souls may never know;
God giveth them to her alone,
And sweet they are as any tone
  Wherewith the wind may choose to blow.

Yet in herself she dwelleth not,
  Although no home were half so fair;
No simplest duty is forgot;
Life hath no dim and lowly spot,
  That doth not in her sunshine share.

She doeth little kindnesses,
  Which most leave undone or despise;
For naught that sets one heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
  Is low esteeméd in her eyes.

She hath no scorn of common things;
And, though she seem of other birth,
Round us her heart entwines and clings,
And patiently she folds her wings
To tread the humble paths of earth.

Blessing she is; God made her so:
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow;
Nor hath she ever chanced to know
That aught were easier than to bless.

She is most fair, and thereunto
Her life doth rightly harmonize;
Feeling or thought that was not true
Ne'er made less beautiful the blue
Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

She is a woman—one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears.

I love her with a love as still
As a broad river's peaceful might,

Which, by high tower and lowly mill,
Goes wandering at its own sweet will,
And yet doth ever flow aright.

And on its full, deep breast serene,
Like quiet isles my duties lie;
It flows around them and between,
And makes them fresh and fair and green,—
Sweet homes wherein to live and die.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE BIRTH-DAY.

TREAD lightly on the sod
Of thy departed years;
Be tender of their broken links,
And mindful of their fears.

The loves of youth's bright dawn,
The hopes of manhood's day;
The flow'ry paths that, all untrod,
In life's fresh morning lay,

Are woven in the web
And fibre of thy soul;
The finest thread that fancy draws
They color and control.

And as the shuttle flies,
  Weaving, and weaving on,
With deeper tints, this costly web,
  Begun in childhood's morn;

Let not the work be marred
  By shadows of regret;
It needed all the changing hues
  A fair design to set.

The lines by passion warped,
  Will round, in graceful curve,
To beauty,—moulded and conformed
  By gentle hand of love.

Be brave if fortune frown,
  Be humble if she smile;
A steadfast faith and manly trust
  The roughest paths beguile.

L. J. R.

THE SECRET.

"Thou wilt keep them in the secret of Thy presence from the strife of tongues."

WHEN winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,
And billows wild contend with angry roar,
'Tis said, far down beneath the wild commotion,
That peaceful stillness reigneth evermore.

Far, far beneath, the noise of tempest dieth,
And silver waves chime ever peacefully;
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er he flieth,
Disturbs the sabbath of that deeper sea.

So to the soul that knows Thy love, O Purest,
There is a temple peaceful evermore!
And all the babble of life's angry voices
Dies hushed in stillness at its sacred door.

Far, far away, the noise of passion dieth,
And loving thoughts rise ever peacefully;
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er he flieth,
Disturbs that deeper rest, O Lord, in Thee.

O, rest of rests! O, peace serene, eternal!
Thou ever livest, and Thou changest never;
And in the secret of Thy presence dwelleth
Fullness of joy, forever and forever.

H. B. STOWE.

HYMN TO THE SPIRIT.

SPIRIT who crownest true temples and altars,
Spirit indicting all holiest lays,
Wake to devotion the strains of our psalters,
Breathe in our bosoms the spirit of praise.

Spirit of life, as the light of the morning,
Pour on our natures thy beauty and might;
Grant us thy thoughts for our spirit's adorning,
Be our Shekinah and Indwelling Light.

Spirit who over the Jordan's waves hovered,
Flame that imparted the Pentecost tongues,
Still be thy presence and glory discovered,
Kindling our hearts and inspiring our songs.

Comforter, come, with thy great consolation;
Light of the seers and believers of old;
Open before us the gates of salvation,
Higher and holier visions unfold.

Pillar of cloud and of fire, for our guiding
Through all the wilderness perils and gloom,
With us, as promised, be ever abiding,
Lead our weak feet to the glorified home.

COMFORTLESS.

TURN my face from the window, and leave me alone,
I pray;
What have I done to merit the burden I bear to-day?
I must go, henceforth, with a shadow veiling forever
my face,
As one should walk who carries the stain of a deep
disgrace.

Lord, I have cried from the depths, but surely Thou
hast not heard,
Else would my pleading have moved Thee, else had
Thy heart been stirred;
Every night of my lifetime, down by my children's
beds,
Prayed have I for a blessing on the restless boyish
heads.

Daily they stood before me, sturdy and fair to see,
Bowing their wills submissive, at even a word from
me;
Keeping, I fain would think it, it comforts me even
yet,
The purity of childhood still upon their foreheads set.

Proud I was, and yet fearful, knowing what snares lie hid
For all but the feet that are quiet under the coffin-lid.
Yet in my darkest moments I did not dream of the way
My weary soul would be treading, anxious and bleeding, to-day.

Drunkards both! oh, my children, better if years ago
You had slept in the churchyard's bosom, under the drifting snow!
Better if I had lost you, tender and pure and white,
Than to shrink from your coming footsteps, as I shall shrink to-night.

Is there no help, O Father? Will not Thy children learn
To shun the pleasures that lure them only to sting and burn?
Send down a sign, I pray Thee! show them whereon they stand;
Show them the dangers that menace, crowding on every hand!

Tell those whose hands are folded, in coldness or in disdain,
That their work is never ended while life and strength remain.
Saving their own is something; but what can they do for the rest,
Going so fast to destruction, our brightest, and once our best?

Tell them the day is coming, some time, or soon or late,
When their hands will witness against them, red with their brothers' fate;
Give them a sign, O Father! show them the sin, I pray,
That they may search in the highways for those who have gone astray.

M. W. P.

WHAT OF THAT?

Tired! Well, what of that?
Didst fancy life was spent on beds of ease,
Fluttering the rose leaves scattered by the breeze?
Come, rouse thee! work while it is called to-day!
Coward, arise! go forth upon thy way!

Lonely! And what of that?
Some must be lonely! 'tis not given to all
To feel a heart responsive rise and fall,
To blend another life into its own.
Work may be done in loneliness. Work on!

Dark! Well, and what of that?
Didst fondly dream the sun would never set?
Dost fear to lose thy way? Take courage yet!
Learn thou to walk by faith and not by sight;
Thy steps will guided be, and guided right.

Hard! Well, what of that?
Didst fancy life one summer holiday,
With lessons none to learn, and naught but play?
Go, get thee to thy task! Conquer or die!
It must be learned! Learn it, then, patiently.

No help! Nay, 'tis not so!
Though human help be far, thy God is nigh,
Who feeds the ravens, hears His children's cry.
He's near thee, wheresoe'er thy footsteps roam;
And He will guide thee, light thee, help thee home.

OUR OWN.

If I had known in the morning
How wearily all the day
The words unkind would trouble my mind
That I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain;
But we vex our own with look and tone
We may never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it well might be that never for me
The pain of the heart should cease!
How many go forth at morning
Who never come home at night!
And hearts have broken for harsh words spoken
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest;
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.
Ah! lips with the curve impatient,
Ah! brow with the shade of scorn,
'Twere a cruel fate were the night too late
To undo the work of morn.

TINY TOKENS.

THE murmur of a waterfall
A mile away,
The rustle when a robin lights
Upon a spray,
The lapping of a lowland stream
On dipping boughs,
The sound of grazing from a herd
Of gentle cows,
The echo from a wooded hill
Of cuckoo's call,
The quiver through the meadow grass
At evening fall;
Too subtle are these harmonies
For pen and rule,
Such music is not understood
By any school;

But when the brain is overwrought
It hath a spell,
Beyond all human skill and power,
To make it well.

The memory of a kindly word
For long gone by,
The fragrance of a fading flower
Sent lovingly,
The gleaming of a sudden smile
Or sudden tear,
The warmer pressure of the hand,
The tone of cheer,
The hush that means, "I cannot speak
But I have heard!"
The note that only bears a verse
From God's own word:
Such tiny things we hardly count
As ministry;
The givers deeming they have shown
Scant sympathy;
But when the heart is overwrought,
Oh, who can tell
The power of such tiny things
To make it well!

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

GOD LEADETH HIS OWN.

How FEW who, from their youthful days,
Look on to what their life may be;
Painting the visions of the way
In colors soft, and bright, and free;
How few who to such paths have brought
The hopes and dreams of early thought!
For God through ways they have not known,
Will lead His own.

The eager hearts, the souls of fire,
Who pant to toil for God and man;
And view with eyes of keen desire,
The upland way of toil and pain;
Almost with scorn they think of rest,
Of holy calm, of tranquil breast;
But God, through ways they have not known,
Will lead His own.

A lowlier task on them is laid—
With love to make the labor light;
And there their beauty they must shed
On quiet homes, and lost to sight,
Changed are their visions bright and fair,

Yet calm and still they labor there;
For God, through ways they have not known,
Will lead His own.

The gentle heart that thinks with pain,
It scarce can lowliest tasks fulfill,
And if it dared its life to scan,
Would ask but pathway low and still—
Often such lowly heart is brought
To act with power beyond its thought:
For God, through ways they have not known,
Will lead His own.

And they, the bright, who long to prove,
In joyous path, in cloudless lot,
How fresh from earth their grateful love
Can spring without a stain or spot—
Often such youthful heart is given
The path of grief to walk to Heaven;
For God, through ways they have not known
Will lead His own.

What matter what the path shall be?
The end is clear and bright to view;
We know that we a strength shall see,
Whate'er the day may bring to do.
We see the end, the house of God,

But not the path to that abode;
For God, through ways they have not known,
Will lead His own.

HERE AM I.

"ALLAH, Allah!" cried the sick man,
Racked with pain the long night through;
Till with prayer his heart grew tender,
Till his lips like honey grew.

But at morning came the Tempter;
Said, "Call louder, child of Pain!
See if Allah ever hear, or answers,
'Here I am!' again."

Like a stab the cruel cavil
Through his brain and pulses went;
To his heart an icy coldness,
And his brain a darkness sent.

Then before him stood Elias;
Says, "My child, why thus dismayed?
Dost repent thy former fervor?
Is thy soul of prayer afraid?"

"Ah!" he cried, "I've called so often;
Never heard the 'Here am I,'
And I thought God will not pity,
Will not turn on me His eye."

Then the grave Elias answered,
"God said, 'Rise, Elias! go
Speak to him, the sorely tempted;
Lift him from his gulf of woe.

"'Tell him that his very longing
Is itself an answering cry;
That his prayer, "Come gracious Allah!"
Is my answer, "Here am I!"'

"Every inmost aspiration
Is God's angel, undefiled;
And in every 'O my Father!'
Slumbers deep a 'Here, my child!'"

DIFFERENT PATHS.

I LATELY talked with one who strove
To show that all my way was dim,
That his alone the road to heaven;
And thus it was I answered him:

"Strike not away the staff I hold,
You cannot give me yours, dear friend!
Up the steep hill our paths are set,
In different ways, to one sure end.

"What though with eagle glance upfixed
On heights beyond our mortal ken,
You tread the broad, sure stones of Faith
More firmly than do weaker men;

"To each according to his strength;
But as we leave the plains below,
Let us carve out a wider stair,
And broader pathway through the snow.

"And when upon the golden crest
We stand at last together, freed
From mists that circle round the base,
And clouds that but obscure our creed,

"We shall perceive that, though our steps
Have wandered wide apart, dear friend,
No pathway can be wholly wrong
That tends unto one perfect end."

STANZAS.

Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought;
Souls to souls can never teach
What unto themselves was taught.

We are spirits clad in veils;
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communing fails
To remove the shadowy screen.

Heart to heart was never known;
Mind with mind did never meet;
We are columns left alone
Of a temple once complete.

Like the stars that gem the sky,
Far apart though seeming near,
In our light we scattered lie;
All is thus but starlight here.

What is social company
But a babbling summer stream?
What our wise philosophy
But the glancing of a dream?

Only when the sun of love
  Melts the scattered stars of thought,
Only when we live above
  What the dim-eyed world hath taught,

Only when our souls are fed
  By the fount which gave them birth,
And by inspiration led
  Which they never drew from earth,

We, like parted drops of rain,
  Swelling till they meet and run,
Shall be all absorbed again,
  Melting, flowing into one.

CRANCH.

THE WILD ROSE BY THE RAILROAD.

ON its straight iron pathway the long train was rushing,
  With its noise and its smoke and its great human load;
And I saw where a wild rose in beauty was blushing,
  Fresh and sweet, by the side of the hot, dusty road.

Untrained were its branches, untended it flourished;
  No eye marked its budding, or mourned its decay;

But its leaves by the soft dew of Heaven were nourished,
And it opened its buds to the warm light of day.

I asked why it grew there, where none prized its beauty;
For, of thousands that passed, none had leisure to stay;
And the answer came, sweetly, "I do but my duty;
I was told to bloom here, by the side of the way."

There are those on life's pathway whose spirits are willing
To dwell where the busy crowd passes them by;
But the dew from above on their lives is distilling,
And they bloom in the smile of the All-Seeing Eye.

They are loved by the few; let the wild rose remind them,
When tempted from duty's lone pathway to stray,
They, too, have a place and a mission assigned them,
Though it be but to grow by the side of the way.

S.

PRAYING IN SECRET.

I NEED not leave the jostling world,
Or wait till daily tasks are o'er,
To fold my hands in secret prayer,
Within the close-shut closet door.

There is a voiceless cloistered room
Within me, open every day;
Where, though my feet may join the throng,
My soul may enter in and pray.

When I have banished wayward thought,
Of sinful works the fruitful seed,
When folly wins the ear no more,
The closet door is shut indeed.

No human step approaching, breaks
The blissful stillness of the place;
No shadow steals across the light
That falls from my Redeemer's face.

One listening, even, cannot know
When I have crossed the threshold o'er,
For He, alone, who hears my prayer
Has heard the shutting of the door.

WEEDS.

We call them weeds, the while with slender fingers
Earth's wounds and scars they seek to cover o'er;
On sterile sands where scarce the rain-drop lingers,
They grow and blossom by the briny shore.

We call them weeds;—did we their forms but study,
We many a secret might enfolded find;
Each tiny plant fulfills its heaven-taught mission,
And bears the impress of immortal mind.

We call them weeds—the while their uses hidden
Might work a nation's weal, a nation's woe;
Send through each wasted frame the balm of healing,
And cause the blood with youth's quick pulse to flow.

Weeds—yet they hold in bonds the mighty ocean!
Their slender threads bind firm the sandy shore;
Navies may sink amid its wild commotion,
These humble toilers ne'er their work give o'er.

And who shall say the feeblest thought avails not
To bind the shifting sands upon life's beach?
Some heart may treasure what we've long forgot,
The faintest word some soul with power may reach.

THE VOICE IN THE TWILIGHT.

I WAS sitting alone, toward the twilight,
With spirit troubled and vexed,
With thoughts that were morbid and gloomy,
And faith that was sadly perplexed.

Some homely work I was doing
For the child of my love and care,
Some stitches half wearily setting
In the endless need of repair.

But my thoughts were about the "building,"
The work some day to be tried;
And that only the gold, and the silver,
And the precious stones should abide.

And remembering my own poor efforts,
The wretched work I had done,
And, even when trying most truly,
The meagre success I had won;

"It is nothing but wood, hay and stubble,"
I said; "it will all be burned—
This useless fruit of the talents
One day to be returned.

"And I have so longed to serve Him,
And sometimes I *know* I have tried;
But I'm sure when He sees *such* building
He will never let it abide."

Just then, as I turned the garment,
That no rent should be left behind,
My eye caught an odd little bungle
Of mending and patchwork combined.

My heart grew suddenly tender,
And something blinded my eyes
With one of those sweet intuitions
That sometimes makes us so wise.

Dear child, she wanted to help me;
I knew 'twas the best she could do;
But O, what a botch she had made it—
The gray mismatching the blue!

And yet—can you understand it?—
With a tender smile and a tear,
And a half compassionate yearning,
I felt her grown more dear.

Then a sweet voice broke the silence,
And the dear Lord said to me,
"Art thou tenderer for the little child
Than I am tender for thee?"

Then straightway I knew His meaning,
So full of compassion and love,
And my faith came back to its Refuge,
Like the glad returning dove.

For I thought when the Master Builder
Comes down His temple to view,
To see what rents must be mended,
And what must be builded anew;

Perhaps, as He looks o'er the building,
He will bring my work to the light,
And seeing the marring and bungling,
And how far it all is from right,

He will feel as I felt for my darling,
And will say, as I said for her,
"Dear child, she wanted to help me,
And love for me was the spur.

"And for the real love that is in it,
The work shall seem perfect as mine;
And because it was willing service,
I will crown it with plaudit divine."

And there in the deepening twilight
I seemed to be clasping a Hand,
And to feel a great love constraining me,
Stronger than any command.

Then I knew by the thrill of sweetness
'Twas the Hand of the Blessed One,
Which would tenderly guide and hold me
Till all the labor is done.

So my thoughts are nevermore gloomy,
My faith no longer is dim;
But my heart is strong and restful,
And mine eyes are unto Him.

HYMN OF TRUST.

O Love Divine, that stoops to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering Thou art near!

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, Thou art near!

O. W. HOLMES.

THE GOLDEN SUNSET.

The golden sea its mirror spreads
Beneath the golden skies,
And but a narrow strip between
Of earth and shadow lies.

The cloud-like rock, the rock-like cloud,
Dissolved in glory float;
And midway of the radiant flood
Hangs silently the boat!

The sea but seems another sky,
The sky a sea as well;
And which is earth and which is heaven
The eye can scarcely tell.

So, when from us life's evening hour
Soft fading shall descend,
May glory born of earth and Heaven
The earth and Heaven blend;—

Flooded with peace, the parting soul
With silent rapture glow,
Till where earth ends and Heaven begins
The spirit scarce can know.

THE WATER AND THE FLOWER.

A MEMORY.

One quiet eve, some years ago, whilst lingering by a stile
That ran along a wayside path, to watch the clouds awhile,
Ere thought had lifted from my heart the shadow of her wing,
I saw a child—a little girl—returning from the spring.
Her well-filled pitcher lightly pressed her curls of silken hair,
Supported by a tiny hand, and she was very fair,
With something in her sunny face pure as the sky above,
And something in her gentle eye that guardian angels love.
A little flower blossoming, a step or so aside,
This happy child of innocence with sudden joy espied;

Then letting down her pitcher, with the same sweet joyous song,
She watered it half laughingly, and gaily tripped along.
The flower seemed to raise its head, bowed by a summer's sun,
And smile beneath the act which she unconsciously had done;
Whilst wandering on, with fairy tread, as merry as before,
I saw her pass the garden gate and close the cottage-door.
O, often when this little scene has crossed my thoughts again,
I've wondered if—with all the love that warmed her spirit then—
This little girl has tripped through life as joyous to the last,
Refreshing all the weary hearts that met her as she passed—
If with unconscious tenderness her heart has paused to bless
The poor amid their poverty, the sad in their distress;
Still following up God's teachings, day by day and hour by hour,
Foreshadowed in that simple scene—the water and the flower;—

If with a song, as pure and sweet, that voice has
hushed to rest
The troubles of an aching heart, a sorrow-laden
breast—
If to the wayside wanderer, where'er her steps have
led,
The pitcher has been lowered ever kindly from her
head.
O, holy, happy Charity! how many pleasures lost
By those who have not known thee, had been worthy
of the cost;
How many heads a blessing from a better world have
borne,
Whilst lowering the pitcher to the weary and the
worn.
Thou who hast stood beside God's spring of blessing
day by day,
To fill the pitcher of thy wants, and carry it away,
The poor and the dejected,—whom God hath willed
to roam—
Are resting by the wayside that leads thee to thy
home!
O! let thy heart beat ever quick in actions kind to
be,
Remember Him whose bounty has at all times fol-
lowed thee;

And deem it not a trouble, in the wayside or the town,
To linger where the weary are, and let the pitcher down.

A. H. S.

THE ETERNAL FATHER.

FATHER! the sweetest, dearest Name
That men or angels know!
Fountain of Life, that had no fount,
From which itself could flow!

Thou comest not, thou goest not;
Thou wert not, wilt not be;
Eternity is but a thought
By which we think of thee.

Lost in thy greatness, Lord! I live
As in some gorgeous maze;
Thy sea of unbeginning light
Blinds me, and yet I gaze.

Thy grandeur is all tenderness,
All motherlike and meek;
The hearts that will not come to it
Humbling itself to seek.

Thou feign'st to be remote, and speak'st
As if from far above,
That fear may make more bold with thee,
And be beguiled to love.

On earth thou hidest, not to scare
Thy children with thy light;
Then showest us thy face in heaven,
When we can bear the sight.

FABER.

THE CHURCH OF HUMANITY.

ISAIAH 60.

OH, church of man and church of God,
Thine altar is but one!
By all alike thine aisles are trod,
By whom His will is done.
They follow on where truth shall lead,
One Father points the way;
In thought and act, in word and deed,
One conscience they obey.
Howe'er divided by their creed,
By color or by clime,
All from one heart of love proceed,—
One life that knows no time.

Their gospel, all God's holy word;
  Their eucharist, the right;
All by one holy spirit stirred,
  And brothers in His sight.
The higher they ascend in Him,
  Whose goodness knows no bound,
The shadows fall away that dim,
  Till perfect light is found.
Come, church of God and church of man,
  Hope of these latter days!
Whose walls salvation's arch shall span,
  Whose open gates be praise.

S. D. ROBBINS.

REMOTE RESULTS.

WHERE are the countless crystals
  So perfect and so bright,
That robed in softest ermine
  The winter day and night?
Not lost! for life to many a root,
They rise again in flower and fruit.

Where are the mighty forests,
  And giant ferns of old,

That in primeval silence
Strange leaf and frond unrolled?
Not lost! for now they shine and blaze,
The light and warmth of Christmas days.

Where are our early lessons,
The teachings of our youth,
The countless words forgotten
Of knowledge and of truth?
Not lost! for they are living still,
As power to think, and do, and will.

Where is the seed we scatter,
With weak and trembling hand
Beside the gloomy waters
Or on the arid land?
Not lost! for after many days
Our prayer and toil shall turn to praise.

Where are the days of sorrow,
And lonely hours of pain,
When work is interrupted,
Or planned and willed in vain?
Not lost! it is the thorniest shoot
That bears the Master's pleasant fruit.

Where, where are all God's lessons,
His teachings, dark or bright?
Not lost, but only hidden,
Till, in eternal light,
We see, while at His feet we fall,
The reasons and results of all.

F. R. HAVERGAL.

LUTHER AND THE BIRD.

THE sun was setting after a day
Gloomy and wet and chill,
And Martin Luther hurried away,
From the garden-spot where the shadows lay,
And the lurid sunset under the gray,
For his heart was darker still.

But out on a branch a bird began,
To carol a little song.
It struck the ear of the moody man,
Sorrowing under an awful ban,
And through his heart its music ran,
And it made him glad and strong.

Then it nestled its head beneath its wing
And quietly went to rest;

And the time was passing afar from Spring,
And the world had many a venomous thing,
And none knew what the night would bring,
With the sun gone out in the west.

But Martin Luther bent his head,
And in his own sweet words
He blessed the Giver of daily bread,
Who conquers the dark of doom and dread;
And he suffered himself to be gently led
By the God of the little birds.

SAMUEL W. DUFFIELD.

IS YOUR LAMP BURNING?

A party of young Friends, rambling through "The Glen," at Newport, on a rural excursion, found the following lines, Eighth month 31st, 1869:

SAY, is your lamp burning, my brother?
I pray you look quickly and see;
For if it were burning, then surely
Some beams would fall bright upon me.

Straight, straight is the road, but I falter,
And oft I fall out by the way;
Then lift your lamp higher, my brother,
Lest I should make fatal delay.

There are many and many around you
Who follow wherever you go;
If you thought that they walked in the shadow,
Your lamp would burn brighter, I know.

Upon the dark mountains they stumble,
They are bruised on the rocks, and they lie
With their white pleading faces turned upward
To the clouds and the pitiful sky.

There is many a lamp that is lighted,
We behold them anear and afar;
But not many among them, my brother,
Shine steadily on like a star.

I think, were they trimmed night and morning,
They would never burn down nor go out,
Though from the four quarters of heaven
The winds were all blowing about.

If once all the lamps that are lighted
Should steadily blaze in a line,
Wide over the land and the ocean,
What a girdle of glory would shine!

How all the dark places would brighten!
How the mists would roll up and away!
How the earth would laugh out in her gladness
To hail the millenial day!

Say, is your lamp burning, my brother?
I pray you look quickly and see;
For if it were burning, then surely
Some beam would fall bright upon me.

TO MY NEEDLE.

Poets have oft invoked the muse
For themes as mean as their old shoes;
Why then thy praise should I refuse?
My needle!

Thou shining steel, with point so keen,
The time would fail to tell, I ween,
Of all that thou to me hast been,
My needle!

Thy homely use I need not praise,
Thy aid in many thrifty ways
To housewife's care for wintry days,
My needle!

Nor how when shiv'ring want drew near,
And Pity lent a listening ear,
Thy ready aid was ever here,
My needle!

Welcome at social converse free,
When busiest thou couldst silent be,
And nimble tongues outrivaled thee,
My needle!

A higher office thou mayst claim,
When as a gentle friend thou came
To aid my best, my thoughtful frame,
My needle!

For though I own thou lent thy aid
To phantoms in bright hues arrayed,
We did not mourn to see them fade,
My needle!

And when stern discipline had brought
My air-built castles all to naught,
Thou proved a friend to solemn thought,
My needle!

But ah! thou hast a rival bold,
Who, like some noisy, bustling scold,
Has spoiled the home, for young and old,
My needle!

The loud pretensions she has made,
In tucked and ruffled skirt arrayed,
Have cast thee quite into the shade,
My needle!

Farewell to quiet musings high,
To social chat while thee we ply;
We cannot part without a sigh,
My needle!

I'm growing old; I fain would see
What will the future woman be,
When she no longer needeth thee,
My needle!

And will her thoughts take wider scope?
Will higher spheres of duty ope?
We do not know! we can but hope,
My needle!

S.

INVITATION.

WHENE'ER, by earthly cares oppressed, the weary spirit faints,
And, in the ear of Providence, it murmurs sad complaints—
The welcome invitation comes, in loving language drest:
"Come unto Me! ye weary, come, and I will give you rest."

"Come unto Me! all ye who toil; who heavy burdens bear:
Come! and before My footstool cast your spirit-load of care:
Take up My yoke and learn of Me: My ways are just and right:
For easy is My yoke to bear; My burden it is light!

"Come unto Me! all ye who mourn; your sorrows let Me share:
My strong right hand and outstretched arm are present everywhere;
Come! and be all your griefs assuaged, all doubts and fears repressed:
In Me, the meek and lowly heart, your souls shall find their rest."

Let not this loving summons fall unheeded at your feet;
Go, cast yourselves in humble fear before the mercy-seat:
There's room for all—God's heart is vast!—broad the Redeemer's breast;
Go unto Him! ye weary, go! and He will give you rest.

R. T.

THE LOST DAY.

Lost! lost! lost!
A gem of countless price,
Cut from the living rock,
And graved in Paradise:
Set round with three times eight
Large diamonds, clear and bright,
And each with sixty smaller ones,
All changeful as the light.

Lost—where the thoughtless throng
In Fashion's mazes wind,
Where trilleth folly's song,
Leaving a sting behind.
Yet to my hand 'twas given
A golden harp to buy,
Such as the white-robed choir attune
To deathless minstrelsy.

Lost! lost! lost!
I feel all search is vain;
That gem of countless cost
Can ne'er be mine again:

I offer no reward—
For till these heart-strings sever,
I know that Heaven's entrusted gift
Is reft away forever.

But when the sea and land
Like burning scroll have fled,
I'll see it in His hand
Who judgeth quick and dead;
And when of scathe and loss
That man can ne'er repair,
The dread inquiry meets my soul,
What shall it answer there?

L. H. SIGOURNEY

WAITING.

SERENE, I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind or tide or sea;
rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace?
stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me;
No wind can drive my bark astray,
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matter if I stand alone?
I wait with joy the coming years;
My heart shall reap where it has sown,
And garner up its fruit of tears.

The waters know their own, and draw
The brook that springs in yonder height;
So flows the good with equal law
Unto the soul of pure delight.

The stars come nightly to the sky,
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me.

J. BURROUGHS.

A STRIP OF BLUE.

I DO not own an inch of land,
  But all I see is mine,—
The orchard and the mowing-fields,
  The lawns and gardens fine.
The winds my tax-collectors are,
  They bring me tithes divine,—
Wild scents and subtle essences,
  A tribute rare and free.
And, more magnificent than all,
  My window keeps for me
A glimpse of blue immensity,—
  A little strip of sea.

Richer am I than he who owns
  Great fleets and argosies;
I have a share in every ship
  Won by the inland breeze
To loiter on yon airy road
  Above the apple-trees.
I freight them with my untold dreams,
  Each bears my own picked crew;
And nobler cargoes wait for them
  Than ever India knew,—

My ships that sail into the East
Across that outlet blue.

Sometimes they seem like living shapes,—
The people of the sky,—
Guests in white raiment coming down
From heaven, which is close by;
I call them by familiar names,
As one by one draws nigh,
So white, so light, so spirit-like,
From violet mists they bloom!
The aching wastes of the unknown
Are half reclaimed from gloom,
Since on life's hospitable sea
All souls find sailing-room.

The ocean grows a weariness
With nothing else in sight;
Its east and west, its north and south,
Spread out from morn to night;
We miss the warm, caressing shore,
Its brooding shade and light.
A part is greater than the whole;
By hints are mysteries told;
The fringes of eternity,—
God's sweeping garment-fold,
In that bright shred of glimmering sea,
I reach out for, and hold.

The sails, like flakes of roseate pearl,
  Float in upon the mist;
The waves are broken precious stones,—
  Sapphire and amethyst,
Washed from celestial basement walls
  By suns unsetting kissed.
Out through the utmost gates of space,
  Past where the gay stars drift,
To the widening Infinite, my soul
  Glides on, a vessel swift;
Yet loses not her anchorage,
  In yonder azure rift.

Here sit I, as a little child;
  The threshold of God's door
Is that clear band of chrysoprase;
  Now the vast temple floor,
The blinding glory of the dome
  I bow my head before;
The universe, O God, is home,
  In height or depth, to me;
Yet here upon thy footstool green
  Content am I to be;
Glad, when is opened to my need
  Some sea-like glimpse of Thee.

LUCY LARCOM.

TRUE PIETY.

To BE the thing we seem;
To do the thing we deem
  Enjoined by duty;
To walk in faith, nor dream
Of questioning God's scheme
  Of truth and beauty;—

Casting self-love aside,
Discarding human pride,
  Our hearts to measure;
In humble hope to bide
Each change in life's rough tide,
  At God's good pleasure;—

To trust, although deceived,
Tell truth, though not believed,
  Falsehood disdaining;
Patient of ills received,
To pardon when aggrieved,
  Passion restraining;—

With love no wrongs can chill,
To save, unwearied still,
  The weak from falling:

This is to do God's will
On earth—and to fulfill
Our heavenly calling.

UNBELIEF.

THERE is no unbelief;
Whoever plants a leaf beneath the sod,
And waits to see it push away the clod,
Trusts he in God.

Whoever says, when clouds are in the sky,
"Be patient, heart! light breaketh by-and-by!"
Trusts the Most High.

Whoever sees, 'neath winter's field of snow,
The silent harvest of the future grow,
God's power must know.

Whoever lies down on his couch to sleep,
Content to lock each sense in slumber deep,
Knows God will keep.

Whoever says "To-morrow," "The unknown,"
"The future," trusts that Power alone
He dares disown.

The heart that looks on when the eyelids close,
And dares to live when life has only woes,
God's comfort knows.

There is no unbelief;
And day by day, and night, unconsciously,
The heart lives by that faith the lips deny;
God knoweth why.

1876.

GREAT Year! how shall we fit thee for thy grave?
What further honors can we pay to thee,
Who every day, in song and minstrelsy,
And loud orations at the cannon's mouth
Have given thee homage? East and North and South,
And the far West, whose purple mountains lie,
Snow-capped, sun-tinged, against th' eternal sky,
Have joined their hands, and raised one joyous shout,
While in their monument of industry
They welcomed every nation 'neath the sun
To bring their best, and, proud or envious, see
What Freedom and a hundred years have done.

They came, they shared our glory, and they left;
Their friendly feelings ripened into love;

They taught us lessons that the years should prove
Of priceless value. What, indeed, are we
But children in the world's great history?
Yet holding in our conscious strength sublime
The grandest possibilities of Time.
Shorn of our small conceits, we stand in tears,
And tender memories linked with every clime,
Beside thy bier, thou fairest of the years,
Resolving, with a glad unfettered will,
To make the coming century grander still.

ANNE F. BRADLEY.

THE INNER SANCTUARY.

THERE is a holy temple,
A sacred house of God!
By human hands not builded,
By human feet ne'er trod.

No voice of priest or preacher
Is heard its aisles among;
No lofty strains of music
Within its walls are sung;

No richly furnished altar
Stands forth in vain array;

Through many-colored windows
No tinted sunbeams play.

But yet a wondrous structure,
Beyond all mortal art;
Its architect, Jehovah!
Its place, the human heart!

This holy fane is open
By night as well as day;
The Master bids us enter—
He gently leads the way.

There He is ever waiting
Our worship to receive,
Our fainting souls to strengthen,
Our sorrows to relieve.

There, in His holy presence,
True peace alone we find,
When, its sacred portals ent'ring,
We leave the world behind.

R. T.

OCEAN REST.

FIERCELY and sternly glowed the fervent sun;
The city languished, and the rural shades
Sighed for the autumn breezes. But the
Cool river flowing past our shores, murmured
Sweet praises of the distant sea, to which
Joyful she bore her tribute evermore.
"Come thou with me, oh weary and perplexed,
Take the white-wingéd ship and float away
To the dark-heaving, wondrous, ancient sea.
Sweet breezes course forever o'er the main,
Unvexed by city wall or mountain chain,
And they will fan thee to forgetfulness
Of strife of tongues, harsh judgments cold and stern,
Toil never-ceasing, overladen hearts
Thou canst not ease by joining in their moan."

Ancient and staunch, the kindly Norman lay
At anchor by the city of our love;
And we ascended to her shaded decks,
Bade farewell to dear friends, who said "God speed,"
And tranquil, joyful, floated toward the sea.
"O strong steam giant, do thy best!" we cried,
"Bear us, all swiftly, far out to the dark

And solemn ocean. We fain would drink of Lethe
And grow, like the great sea, strong and very glad,
Ready for all life's labors, and its cares.
Strong to speak words of gladness and of hope,
Strong to give help to weary laboring ones,
Strong to bear joyously the weight of life,
Strong, too, to cast aside the emptied cup,
But patient still to drink the strange fresh draught
The Father proffers in a chalice new."
The south wind fanned our brows with promise sweet;
The rippling river seemed to murmur low
While the strong Norman plowed her tranquil breast,
Casting afar a wavelet to her shores.
As day declined the waters widened out
And the cool ocean breezes brought to us
A message from the great Atlantic waste.
Then drew we closer on the Norman's deck,
And joined in friendly converse, as the sun
Sank down in glory, gilding all the west
And casting streams of gold athwart the bay.
Then to the east horizon turned our eyes,
In glad expectance of the harvest-moon.
"She will arise; we know it! Naught but man
Resists the impulse of the Word divine!"
And lo, far out beyond the dancing waves,

Earth's gentle daughter opes the eastern gate
Of heaven, and casts her silvery beams along
Their crests. The distant sails pass glorified
Along the bright horizon, and the stars,
Those diamond sparklers, seem to sink
Farther into the distance, smilingly.
Light, beauty, peace and rythmic harmony
Are on the deep, but we must sleep to-night,
And then to-morrow take our Sabbath rest,
Listening to hear thy voice of calm, O sea.
So the kind ocean chaunts a lullaby
And we sink down to find a realm of dreams
More silver-tinted than the moonlit wave.

Morn breaks in beauty o'er the wide expanse,
And we come forth renewed by slumber sweet,
To hail the Sabbath on the dancing sea.
Man's rest is this, but the insensate steam
May toil for man and bear him on his way.
We seat us silent on the shaded deck
And feel the soothing influence of the hour.
Afar are we from all earth's jarring noise,
But wondrous near to Power infinite,
Perfected Beauty, tender, healing Love.
But vast as is our lofty, glorious fane,
No room is here for priest to minister,

No need is here for sounding organ tones;
The sea our priest, the waves, the breeze our choir.
Said one of old, "Though I should take
The morning's wing, and dwell afar, afar,
Even to the utmost parts of the great sea,
Thy hand shall lead, thy right hand hold me now
And evermore."

But see the breeze has died,
The billows, slumbrous, sink into a calm;
The speeding Norman cleaves the silvery sheet,
And from the bow we gaze down in the deep,
And see the glad sea creatures gleam and dart.
The scaly fish,—the weird Medusa strange,
With frail tentacles stretching far behind,
Expanding and contracting fringéd disk
Campanulate,—sinking and rising oft,
And seeming often to reverse his form,
And sink his rising dome into a cap
Reaching up fairy fringes toward the sun.
The little Mother Cary darts along,
Skimming the wave to find the morsel sweet
God furnishes to all His creatures dear.
"Where dwells the little bird?" we question then;
And the wise seaman answers, "On the deep."
We smile and ask no more, but well we know

The brooding mother and the nestling weak
Must have some resting-place secure in marsh
Or reedy shallow, or on rocky height.
When tempests rage, and waves like mountains rise,
This little Petrel can their fury brave,
And pipes his glee, like spirit of the storm.
No fear has he of wind, nor bounding wave,
Nor mighty gallant ship, nor mariner.
And canst thou teach us then, this Sabbath eve,
One lesson more of trust and cheerful faith,
Ere the bright day of joyance is no more
And we resign us yet again to sleep?
For see, the setting sun even now tinges
With tender glory all the western sea.
Nestling, we gather at the vessel's prow,
And in hushed rapture drink the draught of joy.
Day fades again, and night brings forth her stars,
Those glorious watchmen, those most ancient orbs
Which gleamed and sang together, when our earth
First rose, by Word divine, from chaos dark.
There mounts the winged Pegasus as of old,
And there the greater and the lesser Bear
Guarding the pole. The king Cepheus and
His stately spouse, and captive daughter dear
Are radiant, as when in distant age
The fabled monarch reared his shining throne,

And thus embalmed his story 'mong the stars.
Skimming the sea's dim marge, but soaring high,
Far toward the zenith, brilliant Scorpio curves,
Telling of summer's heat in tropic lands.
Down the bright galaxy's mysterious way
Darts the fair Cygnet with her mystic cross—
Symbol of faith, endurance and of hope.
But the night deepens, and chill ocean winds
Come warning us to find safe refuge warm,
For rest and sleep and dream. To-morrow's sun
Will see us anchored by the city vast,
To hear again man's myriad nonsense noises.
So farewell stars, fair sea, and gentle friends;
The Sabbath day upon the deep is o'er.

S. R.

THE TWO MYSTERIES.

In the middle of the room, in its white coffin, lay the dead child, a nephew of the poet. Near it, in a great chair, sat Walt Whitman, surrounded by little ones, and holding a beautiful little girl on his lap. The child looked curiously at the spectacle of death and then inquiringly into the old man's face. "You don't know what it is, do you, my dear?" said he, adding, "We don't, either."

We know not what it is, dear, this sleep so deep and
still;

The folded hands, the awful calm, the cheek so pale and chill;
The lids that will not lift again, though we may call and call;
The strange, white solitude of peace that settles over all.

We know not what it means, dear, this desolate heart pain;
This dread to take our daily way, and walk in it again;
We know not to what other sphere the loved who leave us go,
Nor why we're left to wonder still; nor why we do not know.

But this we know: Our loved and dead, if they should come this day—
Should come and ask us, "What is life?" not one of us could say.
Life is a mystery as deep as ever death can be;
Yet oh, how sweet it is to us, this life we live and see!

Then might they say—these vanished ones—and blessed is the thought!
"So death is sweet to us, beloved! though we may tell ye naught;

We may not tell it to the quick—this mystery of death—
Ye may not tell us, if ye would, the mystery of breath."

The child who enters life comes not with knowledge or intent:
So those who enter death must go as little children sent.
Nothing is known. But I believe that God is overhead;
And as life is to the living, so death is to the dead.

MARY MAPES DODGE.

LIVING WELL.

HE liveth long who liveth well!
All other life is short and vain;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain.

He liveth long who liveth well!
All else is being flung away;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of true things truly done each day.

Waste not thy being; back to Him
Who freely gave it freely give,
Else is that being but a dream,
'Tis but to *be* and not to *live*.

Be wise, and use thy wisdom well;
Who wisdom *speaks*, must *live* it too;
He is the wisest who can tell
How first he *lived*, then *spoke*, the true.

Be what thou seemest; live thy creed;
Hold up to earth the torch Divine;
Be what thou prayest to be made;
Let the great Master's steps be thine.

Fill up each hour with what will last;
Buy up the moments as they go;
The life above, when this is past,
Is the ripe fruit of life below.

Sow truth if thou the true wouldst reap;
Who sows the false shall reap the vain;
Erect and sound thy conscience keep;
From hollow words and deeds refrain.

Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure;
Sow peace, and reap its harvest bright;
Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,
And find a harvest home of light.

BONAR.

SPEAK THOU THE TRUTH.

SPEAK thou the truth. Let others fence,
And trim their words for pay;
In pleasant sunshine of pretence
Let others bask their day.

Guard thou the fact, though clouds of night
Down on thy watch-tower stoop;
Though thou shouldst see thine heart's delight,
Borne from thee by their swoop.

Face thou the wind, though safer seem
In shelter to abide;
We were not made to sit and dream—
The safe must first be tried.

Where God hath set His thorns about,
Cry not, "The way is plain:"
His path within for those without
Is paved with toil and pain.

10365R

One fragment of His blessed Word,
Into thy spirit burned,
Is better than the whole, half-heard,
And by thine interest turned.

Show thou the light. If conscience gleam,
Set not thy bushel down;
The smallest spark may send his beam
O'er hamlet, tower and town.

Woe, woe to him, on safety bent,
Who creeps to age from youth,
Failing to grasp his life's intent,
Because he fears the truth.

DEAN ALFORD.

EXTRACT.

WE watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied;
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

HOOD.

THE FRIEND'S BURIAL.

MY thoughts are all in yonder town,
Where, wept by many tears,
To-day my mother's friend lays down
The burden of her years.

True as in life, no poor disguise
Of death with her is seen,
And on her simple casket lies
No wreath of bloom and green.

O not for her the florist's art,
The mocking weeds of woe;
But blessings of the voiceless heart,
The love that passeth show!

Yet all about the softening air
Of new-born sweetness tells,
And the ungathered May-flowers wear
The tints of ocean shells.

The old, assuring miracle
Is fresh as heretofore;
And earth takes up its parable
Of life from death once more.

Here organ swell and church-bell toll
Methinks but discord were:
The prayerful silence of the soul
Is best befitting her.

No sound should break the quietude
Alike of earth and sky;
O wandering wind in Seabrook wood,
Breathe but a half-heard sigh!

Sing softly, spring-bird, for her sake,
And thou not distant sea,
Lapse lightly as if Jesus spake,
And thou wert Galilee!

For all her quiet life flowed on
As meadow streamlets flow,
Where fresher green reveals alone
The noiseless ways they go.

From her loved place of prayer I see
The plain-robed mourners pass,
With slow feet treading reverently
The graveyard's springing grass.

Make room, O mourning ones, for me,
Where, like the friends of Paul,
That you no more her face shall see
You sorrow most of all.

Her path shall brighten more and more
Unto the perfect day;
She cannot fail of peace who bore
Such peace with her away.

O sweet, calm face that seemed to wear
The look of sins forgiven!
O voice of prayer that seemed to bear
Our own needs up to heaven.

How reverent in our midst she stood,
Or knelt in grateful praise!
What grace of Christian womanhood
Was in her household ways!

For still her holy living meant
No duty left undone;
The heavenly and the human blent
Their kindred loves in one.

And if her life small leisure found
For feasting ear and eye,
And pleasure, on her daily round,
She passed unpausing by,—

Yet with her went a secret sense
Of all things sweet and fair,
And beauty's gracious providence
Refreshed her unaware.

She kept her line of rectitude
With love's unconscious ease;
Her kindly instincts understood
All gentle courtesies.

An inborn charm of graciousness
Made sweet her smile and tone,
And glorified her farm-wife dress
With beauty not its own.

The dear Lord's best interpreters
Are humble human souls;
The Gospel of a life like hers
Is more than books or scrolls.

From scheme and creed the light goes out,
The saintly fact survives;
The blessed Master none can doubt
Revealed in holy lives.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

IF WE KNEW.

If we knew the woe and heart-ache
  Waiting for us down the road,
If our lips could taste the wormwood,
  If our backs could feel the load,
Would we waste the day in wishing
  For a time that ne'er can be?
Would we wait in such impatience
  For our ships to come from sea?

If we knew the baby fingers
  Pressed against the window-pane,
Would be cold and stiff to-morrow—
  Never trouble us again—
Would the bright eyes of our darling
  Catch the frown upon our brow?
Would the print of rosy fingers
  Vex us then as they do now?

Ah, these little ice-cold fingers,
  How they point our memories back
To the hasty words and actions
  Strewn along our backward track!—

How those little hands remind us,
As in snowy grace they lie,
Not to scatter thorns—but roses—
For our reaping by and by.

Strange we never prize the music
Till the sweet-voiced bird has flown;
Strange that we should slight the violets
Till the lovely flowers are gone;
Strange that Summer skies and sunshine
Never seem one-half so fair,
As when Winter's snowy pinions
Shake the white down in the air!

Lips from which the seal of silence
None but God can roll away,
Never blossomed in such beauty
As adorns the mouth to-day;
And sweet words that freight our memory
With their beautiful perfume,
Come to us in sweeter accents
Through the portals of the tomb.

Let us gather up the sunbeams
Lying all around our path;
Let us keep the wheat and roses,
Casting out the thorns and chaff;

Let us find our sweetest comfort
In the blessings of to-day,
With a patient hand removing
All the briers from our way.

THE COMFORTER.

THY sweetness hath betrayed thee, Lord!
Dear Spirit, it is thou!
Deeper and deeper in my heart
I feel thee nestling now.

Oh! that Thou mightest stay with me!
Or else that I might die
While heart and soul are still subdued
With thy sweet mastery!

Thy home is with the humble, Lord!
The simple are thy rest;
Thy lodging is in childlike hearts,
Thou makest there thy nest!

Dear Comforter! Eternal Love!
If thou wilt stay with me,
Of lowly thoughts and holy ways
I'll build a nest for thee!

Who made this beating heart of mine,
But Thou, my heavenly guest!
Let no one have it, then, but Thee,
And let it be Thy rest.

F. W. FABER.

SONG OF THE BROOK.

I COME from haunts of coot and hern;
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges;
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles;
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me as I travel,
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel;

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots;
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet Forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
  Among my skimming swallows,
I make the netted sunbeam dance
  Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
  In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
  I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
  To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on forever.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

THE LAW OF LOVE.

II KINGS iv, 3.

POUR forth the oil,—pour boldly forth;
  It will not fail, until
Thou failest vessels to provide,
  Which it may largely fill.

Make channels for the streams of love,
Where they may broadly run,
And love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one.

But if at any time we cease
Such channels to provide,
The very founts of love, for us,
Will soon be parched and dried.

For we must share, if we would keep,
That blessing from above:
Ceasing to give we cease to have;
Such is the law of love.

R. C. TRENCH.

UPWARD AND ONWARD.

DWELLER in the marshy lowland,
Dim with fog and damp and chill,
Judge not thou thy hardy brother,
Leaving thee to climb the hill.

Soon he calls thee to come with him;
He is breathing purer air;
Prospects bright are spread before him,
Which he fain would have thee share.

Linger not in thy low dwelling,
Where no prospect thou canst see,
Save one dead unvarying level,
Which seems all the world to thee.

Up, and climb the steep before thee,
With a strength till then unfelt,
Looking down with grateful wonder
At the spot where thou hast dwelt.

Thou wilt see thy brother told thee
No wild fancy of his brain,
When he said the sun was rising,
Shedding light on hill and plain.

Thou wilt feel the bracing current
Give new life to ev'ry limb;
And, instead of gloomy murmuring,
Thou wilt now rejoice with him.

Toiling on, though rough the road be,
Work and prayer divide the day;
Thou wilt find no time to idle,
Or mark out a brother's way.

If he stumble, pause and stay him;
Help him grasp the nearest limb;
Haply ere the journey's ended
Thou mayst need such aid from him.

Thorns may tear thee, footing fail thee,
Sliding back a little space;
Heed not, take the next step firmer,
Thou wilt reach a resting place.

Worn and wearied, here repose thee;
Still awhile thy panting breast;
Higher peaks are yet before thee,
This is not thy final rest.

Still as higher thou ascendest,
Plainer seems the path thou'st trod,
And the prospect lies before thee,
Resting in the light of God.

S.

THE FRUIT OF SORROW.

Do NOT cheat thy heart and tell her,
"Grief will pass away;
Hope for fairer times in future,
And forget to-day."
Tell her, if you will, that sorrow
Need not come in vain;
Tell her that the lesson taught her
Far outweighs the pain.

Cheer her not with the old comfort,
"Soon she will forget,"
Bitter truth, alas! but matter
Rather for regret.
Bid her not "Seek other pleasures,
Turn to other things;"
Rather nurse her caged sorrow,
Till the captive sings.

Rather bid her go forth bravely,
And the stranger greet;
Not as foe, with spear and buckler,
But as dear friends meet.
Bid her with a strong clasp hold her,
By her dusky wings,
Listening for the murmured blessing
Sorrow always brings.

A. A. PROCTOR.

ARE THE CHILDREN AT HOME?

EACH day when the glow of sunset
Fades in the western sky,
And the wee ones, tired of playing,
Go tripping lightly by,

I steal away from my husband,
Asleep in his easy chair,
And watch from the open doorway
Their faces fresh and fair.

Alone in the dear old homestead
That was once so full of life,
Ringing with girlish laughter,
Echoing boyish strife,
We two are waiting together;
And oft, as the shadows come,
With tremulous voice he calls me,
"It is night! are the children home?"

"Yes, love!" I answer him, gently,
"They're all home long ago;"—
And I sing, in my quivering treble,
A song so soft and low,
Till the old man drops to slumber,
With his head upon his hand,
And I tell to myself the number
Home in a better land.

Home, where never a sorrow
Shall dim their eyes with tears!
Where the smile of God is on them
Through all the summer years!

Cheat her not with the old comfort,
"Soon she will forget;"
Bitter truth, alas! but matter
Rather for regret.
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And I tell to myself the number
  Home in a better land.

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  Shall dim their eyes with tears!
Where the smile of God is on them
  Through all the summer years!

I know!—yet my arms are empty,
That fondly folded seven,
And the mother heart within me
Is almost starved for heaven.

Sometimes in the dusk of evening,
I only shut my eyes,
And the children are all about me,
A vision from the skies;
The babes whose dimpled fingers
Lost the way to my breast,
And the beautiful ones, the angels,
Passed to the world of the blessed.

A breath, and the vision is lifted
Away on wings of light,
And again we two are together,
All alone in the night.
They tell me his mind is failing,
But I smile at idle fears;
He is only back with the children,
In the dear and peaceful years.

And still as the summer sunset
Fades away in the west,
And the wee ones, tired of playing,
Go trooping home to rest,

My husband calls from his corner,
"Say, love! have the children come?"
And I answer, with eyes uplifted,
"Yes, dear! they are all at home!"

A LESSON.

LAST night I weighed, quite wearied out,
The question that perplexes still;
And that sad spirit we call doubt
Made the good nought beside the ill.

This morning, when with rested mind
I try again the self same theme,
The whole is altered, and I find
The balance turned, the good supreme.

A little sleep, a brief night's rest,
Has changed the look of all that is!
Sure any creed I hold at best
Needs humble holding after this.

CENTENNIAL HYMN,

Prepared for the opening of the United States International Exposition of 1876.

OUR fathers' God, from out whose hand
The centuries fall like grains of sand,
We meet to-day, united, free,
And loyal to our land and Thee!
To thank Thee for the era done,
And trust Thee for the opening one.

Here, where of old, by Thy design
The fathers spake that word of Thine
Whose echo is the glad refrain
Of rended bolt and falling chain,
To grace our festal time, from all
The zones of earth our guests we call.

Be with us while the New World greets
The Old World thronging all its streets,
Unveiling all the triumphs won
By art or toil beneath the sun;
And unto common good ordain
This rivalship of hand and brain.

Thou who hast here in concord furled
The war flags of a gathered world,
Beneath our Western skies fulfill
The Orient's mission of good will,
And, freighted with Love's golden fleece,
Send back the Argonauts of peace.

For art and labor met in truce,
For beauty made the bride of use,
We thank Thee, while withal we crave
The austere virtues strong to save,
The honor proof to place or gold,
The manhood never bought or sold!

O! make thou us, through centuries long
In peace secure, in justice strong;
Around our gift of freedom draw
The safeguards of Thy righteous law,
And, cast in some diviner mould,
Let the new cycle shame the old!

J. G. WHITTIER.

SMALL BEGINNINGS.

A TRAVELER through a dusty road strewed acorns on the lea;
And one took root and sprouted up, and grew into a tree.
Love sought its shade, at evening time, to breathe his early vows;
And age was pleased, in heats of noon, to bask beneath its boughs;
The dormouse loved its dangling twigs, the birds sweet music bore;
It stood a glory in its place, a blessing evermore.

A little spring had lost its way amid the grass and fern,
A passing stranger scooped a well, where weary men might turn;
He walled it in, and hung with care a ladle at the brink;
He thought not of the deed he did, but judged that toil might drink.
He passed again, and lo! the well, by summers never dried,

Had cooled ten thousand parchéd tongues, and saved
a life beside.

A dreamer dropped a random thought; 'twas old, and
yet 'twas new;
A simple fancy of the brain, but strong in being true.
It shone upon a genial mind, and lo! its light became
A lamp of life, a beacon ray, a monitory flame;
The thought was small, its issue great, a watch-fire
on the hill;
It sheds its radiance far adown, and cheers the valley
still.

A nameless man, amid a crowd that thronged the
daily mart,
Let fall a word of hope and love, unstudied, from the
heart;
A whisper on the tumult thrown,—a transitory
breath,—
It raised a brother from the dust; it saved a soul
from death.
O germ! O fount! O word of love! O thought at
random cast;
Ye were but little at the first, but mighty at the last.

CHARLES MACKAY.

NOTHING TO SPARE.

WHAT? hast thou *naught* to spare? Alas! thy lot
Indeed is hapless; thou art very poor.
Poorer than thy poor brethren who have not
The hoarded much, that crieth still for more!
Where are thy baubles? Where thy glittering toys?
Where thy rich trappings? Thy amusements, where?
The daily luxury that only cloys?
Oh! look, and see if thou hast "naught to spare."

Where is thy wasted time? Thy unbreathed word
Of gentleness? Thy hidden talent, where?
The look of pity which thou mightst accord?
Oh! do not tell me thou hast "naught to spare."
Bethink thee ere thou speakest so again,
And for thy needy brethren have some care;
Oh! be more grateful to thy Father, when
So *much* He giveth thee—so much "to spare."

THE ALPINE SHEEP.

WHEN on my ear your loss was knelled,
And tender sympathy upburst,
A little spring from memory welled,
Which once had quenched my bitter thirst.

And I was fain to bear to you
A portion of its mild relief,
That it might be as cooling dew,
To steal some fever from your grief.

After our child's untroubled breath
Up to the Father took its way,
And on our home the shade of death
Like a long twilight haunting lay,

And friends came round with us to weep
Her little spirit's swift remove,
The story of the Alpine sheep
Was told to us by one we love.

They, in the valley's sheltering care,
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,
And when the sod grows brown and bare
The Shepherd strives to make them climb

To airy shelves of pasture green
That hang along the mountain's side,
Where grass and flowers together lean,
And down through mists the sunbeams slide.

But naught can tempt the timid things
The steep and rugged path to try,
Though sweet the Shepherd calls and sings,
And seared below the pastures lie,—

Till in his arms their lambs he takes,
Along the dizzy verge to go;
Then, heedless of the rifts and breaks,
They follow on o'er rock and snow.

And in those pastures, lifted fair,
More dewy soft than lowland mead,
The Shepherd drops his tender care,
And sheep and lambs together feed.

This parable, by Nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south wind free
O'er frozen brooks, that flow unsheathed
From icy thraldom to the sea.

A blissful vision, through the night,
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the good Shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the starry way;

Holding *our* little lamb asleep,—
While, like the murmur of the sea,
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying, "Arise, and follow me."

M. LOWELL.

ONE STEP MORE.

WHAT though before me it is dark,
Too dark for me to see?
I ask but light for one step more;
'Tis quite enough for me.

Each little humble step I take
The gloom clears from the next;
So, though 'tis very dark beyond,
I never am perplexed.

And if sometimes the mist hangs close,
So close I fear to stray,
Patient I wait a little while,
And soon it clears away.

I would not see my further path,
For mercy veils it so;
My present steps might harder be,
Did I the future know.

It may be that my path is rough,
Thorny, and hard, and steep;
And, knowing this, my strength might fail,
Through fear and terror deep.

It may be that it winds along
A smooth and flowery way;
But seeing this I might despise
The journey of to-day.

Perhaps my path is very short,
My journey nearly done;
And I might tremble at the thought
Of ending it so soon.

Or, if I saw a weary length
Of road that I must wend,
Fainting, I'd think, "My feeble powers
Will fail me ere the end."

And so I do not wish to see
My journey or its length;
Assured that, through my Father's love,
Each step will bring its strength.

Thus step by step I onward go,
Not looking far before;
Trusting that I shall always have
Light for just "one step more."

"ALL THINGS ARE YOURS."

I own no lands, I hoard no golden treasure;
No roof is mine beneath the sky's broad dome;
Yet rich I am, and hold in ample measure
Estates in fee, and everywhere a home.

Each flower is mine that by its beauty lures me,
Each bird that lifts me on its tide of song,
Each star that by its steadfastness assures me
Its Maker, God, in patience watcheth long.

The fields are mine when first they take their greenness,
And softly yield beneath my pressing feet;
The hills are mine when they rebuke my meanness,
And lead me up, their larger faith to meet.

All things are mine that fill my soul's deep longing,
Or cheer my heart along the ways I plod;
I find a home and sweet thoughts round me thronging
Where'er I stand amid the works of God.

C. A. Humphreys.

OUR SAINTS.

'Tis not alone from legend and old story,
'Tis not alone from canvas, dark with time,
That holy saints, crowned with celestial glory,
Smile down upon us from their height sublime.

Not only from church windows, colored brightly,
Do their blest shadows fall across our way;
Ah, not alone in niches gleaming whitely,
With folded hands, do they stand night and day.

Who is there in this world who has not, hidden
Deep in his heart, a picture, clear or faint,
Veiled, sacred, to the outer world forbidden,
O'er which he bends and murmurs low, "My saint."

A face, perhaps, all written o'er with sorrow,
Whose faded eyes are dim with unshed tears;
And yet they hopefully look toward the morrow,
And far beyond it, into brighter spheres.

A face, whence all the sunshine of the morning
And brightness of the noon have passed away;

And yet where clearly, surely, there is dawning
The wondrous radiance of that perfect day.

That perfect day—when crowned with Heaven's brightness,
Without a pain, or care, or mortal need,
With conqueror's palm, in robe of snowy whiteness,
Our blest shall stand, as very saints indeed.

Yes, God be thanked! though the pure saints of story,
And holy martyrs that the artist paints,
Are veiled in radiance and crowned with glory,
There still are halos for these unknown saints.

A. R. M.

THE ETERNAL GOODNESS.

O FRIENDS! with whom my feet have trod
The quiet aisles of prayer,
Glad witness to your zeal for God
And love of men I bear.

I trace your lines of argument,
Your logic linked and strong;

I weigh as one who dreads dissent,
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds;
Against the words ye bid me speak
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?
Who talks of scheme and plan?
The Lord is God! He needeth not
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with boldness shod;
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

Ye praise His justice; even such
His pitying love I deem;
Ye seek a king; I fain would touch
The robe that hath no seam.

Ye see the curse which overbroods
A world of pain and loss;
I hear our Lord's beatitudes
And prayer upon the cross.

More than your schoolmen teach, within
Myself, alas! I know;
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dust,
I veil mine eyes for shame,
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
The world confess its sin:

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed stake my spirit clings:
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look when cherubim
And seraphs may not see,
But nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below
I dare not throne above;

I know not of His hate—I know
His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known
Of greater out of sight,
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own
His judgments, too, are right.

I long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long;
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruiséd reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,
Nor works my faith to prove;
I can but give the gifts He gave,
And plead His love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

O brothers! if my faith is vain,
If hopes like these betray,
Pray for me that my feet may gain
The sure and safer way.

And Thou, O Lord! by whom are seen
Thy creatures as they be,
Forgive me if too close I lean
My human heart on Thee!

J. G. WHITTIER.

GROWING IN GRACE.

THIS did not once so trouble me
That better I could not love Thee;
  But now I feel and know,
That only when we love, we find
How far our hearts remain behind
  The love they should bestow.
While we had little care to call
On Thee, and scarcely prayed at all,
  We seemed enough to pray:
But now we only think with shame
How seldom to Thy glorious name
  Our lips their offerings pay.
And when we gave yet slighter heed
Unto our brother's suffering need,
  Our hearts reproached us then
Not half so much as now, that we
With such a careless eye can see
  The woes and wants of men.
In doing is this knowledge won,
To see what yet remains undone;

With this our pride repress,
And give us grace, a growing store,
That day by day we may do more,
And may esteem it less.

TRENCH.

THE CONTRAST.

Go out into the crowded streets
And tread the busy mart,
To find among the multitude
How small a thing thou art!

The cares that weigh thy spirit down,
The joy that lights thy eye,
The thought that swells for utterance,
None know who pass thee by.

No face puts off its careless smile
Because thy heart is sad,
Nor any pause while hurrying on,
To ask why thou art glad.

Thou art but one—a grain of sand—
While ocean hurries on;
Thousands like thee are swept away,
Yet none perceives they're gone.

Go to thy closet! shut the door,
And be with God alone,
To know how *great* that human soul
Omnipotence can own.

Before the sigh escapes thy lips,
Before the tear can fall,
Or sweet thanksgiving words ascend,
He knows, He knows it all.

Though myriad souls, in myriad worlds,
Bow down before His throne,
Yet thou art near and dear, as though
Thou wert the only one.

O, let the Cleanser enter in,
And purify thy heart;
For thou must live the spirit's life,
To know how *great* thou art.

S.

TROUBLED.

I VEX my soul with life's great problem; sit
And fold my hands, and ponder all the day;
At last, half weary of the hopeless task,
I turn to find the light has slipped away.

When the gray east is dawning into gold
I wake, and murmur that the whole world lies
So soon to be aroused from quiet sleep,
To bitter penury and orphans' cries.

And while the morning hours are speeding by,
I let my daily duties lie undone,
The while I think and shudder o'er the wrong
Men compass 'twixt the rise and set of sun.

Then, when high noon is shining in the sky,
I turn me from my meal, and cannot eat
For brooding o'er the famine-stricken land,
Where thousands die of hunger in the street.

And yet, again, when household friends are near,
And I have welcomed them as best I may,
At all their words of comfort, hope and cheer
I sadly smile, and turn my face away.

How can I smile when earth so stricken is?—
When I behold her sin and pain and woe?—
How can I mingle in their joyous cares,
And let these questions all unheeded go?

. . . . . .

Oh, child of earth, whose spirit waxeth faint
With thinking of the evils life doth bear,

Canst thou not trust the pulses of the world,
That throb so hotly, to thy Father's care?

Into thy charge hath He not given space,
All of thine own, to make look green and sweet,
To be a haven unto troubled souls—
To be a resting-place for weary feet?

Doth He require of thee aught but this,
To let thy garden show itself so fair
That others, seeing it, shall straightway go
And till the portions given to their care,

Till all are like to thine? He doth not need
That thou shouldst aid Him any other way,
By weak repinings and by fruitless tears,
Because of evils which thou canst not stay.

A thousand years are as a single day
To Him who doeth all things for the best;
Vex not thy soul, do what thou canst and pray,
And leave with Him the care of all the rest.

M. J P.

NAMELESS MARTYRS.

THE kings of old have shrine and tomb
In many a minster's haughty gloom;
And green, along the ocean's side,
The mounds arise where heroes died;
But show me on thy flowery breast,
Earth! where thy nameless martyrs rest;—

The thousands that, uncheered by praise,
Have made one offering of their days;
For truth, for heaven, for freedom's sake,
Resigned the bitter cup to take;
And silently, in fearless faith,
Have bowed their noble souls to death.

What though no stone the record bears
Of their deep thoughts and lonely prayers;
May not our inmost hearts be stilled,
With knowledge of their presence filled,
And by their lives be taught to prize
The meekness of self-sacrifice?

F. HEMANS.

MY ANGEL LOVE.

I GAZED down life's dim labyrinth,
A 'wildering maze to see,
Crossed o'er by many a tangled clew,
And wild as wild could be;
And as I gazed, in doubt and dread,
An angel came to me.

I knew him for a heavenly guide—
I knew him even then,
Though meekly as a child he stood
Among the sons of men—
By his deep spirit loveliness
I knew him even then.

And as I leaned my weary head
Upon his proffered breast,
And scanned the peril-haunted wild
From out my place of rest,
I wondered if the shining ones
Of Eden were more blest.

For there was light within my soul,
Light on my peaceful way,
And all around the blue above

The clustering starlight lay;
And easterly I saw upreared
The pearly gates of day.

So hand in hand we trod the wild,
My angel love and I—
His lifted wing all quivering
With tokens from the sky.
Strange, my dull thoughts could not divine
'Twas lifted but to fly!

Again down life's dim labyrinth
I grope my way alone,
While wildly through the midnight sky
Black hurrying clouds are blown,
And thickly in my tangled path
The sharp, bare thorns are sown.

Yet firm my foot, for well I know
The goal cannot be far,
And ever through the rifted clouds
Shines out one steady star,—
For when my guide went up, he left
The pearly gates ajar!

EMILY JUDSON.

THE EVE OF ELECTION.

FROM gold to gray
Our mild, sweet day
Of Indian summer fades too soon;
But tenderly
Above the sea
Hangs, white and calm, the hunter's moon.

In its pale fire
The village spire
Shows like the Zodiac's spectral lance;
The painted walls
Whereon it falls
Transfigured stand in marble trance.

O'er fallen leaves
The west wind grieves,
Yet comes a seed-time round again;
And morn shall see
The State sown free
With baleful tares or healthful grain.

Along the street
The shadows meet
Of Destiny, whose hands conceal

The moulds of fate
That shape the State,
And make or mar the common weal.

Around I see
The powers that be;
I stand by Empire's primal springs,
And princes meet
In every street,
And hear the tread of uncrowned kings!

Hark! through the crowd
The laugh rings loud,
Beneath the sad, rebuking moon,
God save the land
A careless hand
May shake or swerve ere morrow's noon

No jest is this:
One cast amiss
May blast the hope of Freedom's year.
Oh! take me where
Are hearts of prayer
And heads bowed low in reverent fear.

Not lightly fall
Beyond recall
The written scrolls a breath can float;

The crowning fact,
The kingliest act
Of freedom is the freeman's vote.

For pearls that gem
A diadem,
The diver in the deep sea dies;
The regal right
We boast to-night
Is ours through costlier sacrifice.

Our hearts grow cold,
We lightly hold
A right which brave men died to gain;
The stake, the cord,
The axe, the sword,
Grim nurses at its birth of pain.

The shadow rend,
And o'er us bend,
O martyrs, with your crowns and palms!
Breathe through these throngs
Your battle-songs,
Your scaffold-prayers and dungeon-psalms.

Look from the sky,
Like God's great eye,
Thou solemn moon, with searching beam,

Till in the sight
Of thy pure light
Our mean self-seekings meaner seem.

Shame from our hearts
Unworthy arts,
To fraud designed, the purpose dark;
And smite away
The hands we lay
Profanely on the sacred ark.

To party claims
And private aims
Reveal that august face of Truth,
Whereto are given
The age of Heaven,
The beauty of immortal youth.

So shall our voice
Of sovereign choice
Swell the deep bass of duty done,
And strike the key
Of time to be,
When God and man shall speak as one.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

A WORD FOR THE MOTHER.

SEND the children to bed with a kiss and a smile;
Sweet childhood will tarry at best but awhile;
And soon they will pass from the portals of home,
The wilderness ways of their life-work to roam.

Yes, tuck them in bed with a gentle "good-night!"
The mantle of shadows is veiling the light;
And maybe—God knows—on this sweet little face
May fall deeper shadows in life's weary race.

Yes, say it: "God bless my dear children, I pray!"
It may be the last you will say it for aye!
The night may be long ere you see them again;
And motherless children may call you in vain!

Drop sweet benediction on each little head,
And fold them in prayer as they nestle in bed;
A guard of bright angels around them invite,
The spirit may slip from the mooring to-night.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

If all our life were one broad glare
Of sunlight clear, unclouded;
If all our path were smooth and fair,
By no deep gloom enshrouded;

If all life's flowers were fully blown
Without the slow unfolding,
And happiness, mayhap, was thrown
On hands too weak for holding;

Then we should miss the twilight hours,
The intermingling sadness,
And pray, perhaps, for storms and showers
To break the constant gladness.

If none were sick and none were sad,
What service could we render?
I think if we were always glad
We hardly could be tender.

Did our beloved never need
Our loving ministration,
Life would grow cold, and miss, indeed,
Its finest consolation.

If sorrow never smote the heart,
And every wish were granted,
Then faith would die, and hope depart,
And life be disenchanted.

And if in heaven is no more night,
In heaven no more sorrow,
Such unimagined pure delight
Fresh grace from pain will borrow.

As the poor seed that underground
Seeks its true life above it,
Not knowing where it will be found
When sunbeams touch and love it;

So we in darkness upward grow,
And look and long for heaven;
Yet cannot reach it here below,
Till more of light be given.

THE UNATTAINED.

Why thus longing, thus forever sighing,
For the far off, unattained and dim;
While the beautiful, around thee lying,
Offers up its low, perpetual hymn?

Wouldst thou listen to its gentle teaching,
All thy restless yearning it would still;
Leaf and flower, and laden bee are preaching,
Thine own sphere, though humble, first to fill.

Poor, indeed, thou must be, if around thee
Thou no ray of light and joy canst throw,
If no silken cord of love hath bound thee
To some little world, through weal and woe;

If no dear eyes thy fond love can brighten—
No fond voices answer to thine own;
If no brother's sorrow thou canst lighten,
By daily sympathy and gentle tone.

Not by deeds that win the world's applauses,
Not by works that give the world-renown,
Nor by martyrdom, or vaunted crosses,
Canst thou win and wear the immortal crown.

Daily struggling, though unloved and lonely,
Every day a rich reward will give;
Thou wilt find, by hearty striving only,
And truly loving, thou canst truly live

Dost thou revel in the rosy morning,
When all nature hails the lord of light,

And his smile, the mountain tops adorning,
Robes yon fragrant fields in radiance bright?

Other hands may own the field and forest,
Proud proprietors in pomp may shine;
But with fervent love, if thou adorest,
Thou art wealthier—all the world is thine!

Yet, if through earth's wide domains thou rovest,
Sighing that they are not thine alone,
Not those fair fields, but thyself thou lovest,
And their beauty and thy wealth are gone.

Nature wears the color of the spirit;
Sweetly to her worshipper she sings;
All the glow, the grace she doth inherit,
Round her thirsting child she fondly flings.

H. WINSLOW.

ANDREW RYKMAN'S PRAYER.

LET the lowliest task be mine,
Grateful, so the work be thine;
Let me find the humblest place
In the shadow of thy grace;

Blest to me were any spot
Where temptation whispers not.
If there be some weaker one,
Give me strength to help him on;
If a blinder soul there be,
Grant that I his guide may be.

May my mortal dreams come true
With the work I fain would do;
Clothe with life the weak intent,
Let me be the thing I meant;
Let me find in thy employ
Peace, that dearer is than joy;
Out of self to love be led,
And to heaven acclimated,
Until all things sweet and good
Seem my natural habitude.

J. G. WHITTIER.

"ME, TOO!"

"WE'LL seek for flowers in the woods,"
I heard a mother say;
"For in their shady solitudes
My children love to play.

Come, Willie, call the other boys,
  Ere falls the evening dew;"
And then another little voice,
  Soft pleading, said: "Me, too!"

O childish heart, that could not bear
  Her name should be forgot!
O childish love, that longed to share
  With all the common lot!
Such tone should ne'er be heard in vain,
  So tremulous and true;
A link in that sweet household chain,
  She claimed her right—"Me, too!"

But not alone in childhood's years
  The heart gives out this cry;
'Tis heard amid the silent tears
  Of life's deep agony.
The lonely soul, athirst for love,
  Will cry as infants do;
And lift, all other tones above,
  Its passionate—"Me, too!"

Formed by one hand, we live and die;
  Before one throne we kneel;
The longings of humanity
  Send up one deep appeal.

Our nature's tendrils intertwine,
Fed by one common dew;
None seek in solitude to pine,
Each heart throb says: "Me, too!"

God teach us, then, in rank to stand,
Firm as brave spirits should;
Joined heart to heart, and hand to hand,
In holy brotherhood;
And casting off the ice of pride,
Wear warm hearts, mild and true;
Nor from the weakest turn aside
Who feebly cries—"Me, too!"

GROWING OLD.

SOFTLY, oh softly, the years have swept by thee,
Touching thee lightly with tenderest care;
Sorrow and death did they often bring nigh thee,
Yet they have left thee but beauty to wear.
Growing old gracefully,
Gracefully fair.

Far from the storms that are lashing the ocean,
Nearer each day to the pleasant home light;

Far from the waves that are big with commotion,
Under full sail, and the harbor in sight.
Growing old cheerfully,
Cheerful and bright.

Past all the winds that were adverse and chilling,
Past all the islands that lured thee to rest,
Past all the currents that wooed thee unwilling
Far from the port and the land of the blest.
Growing old peacefully,
Peaceful and blest.

Never a feeling of envy or sorrow
When the bright faces of children are seen;
Never a year from their youth wouldst thou borrow;
Thou dost remember what lieth between.
Growing old willingly,
Gladly, I ween.

Rich in experience that angels might covet,
Rich in a faith that has grown with thy years,
Rich in the love that grew from and above it,
Soothing thy sorrows and hushing thy fears.
Growing old wealthily,
Loving and dear.

Hearts at the sound of thy coming are lightened;
Ready and willing thy hand to relieve;
Many a face at thy kind words has brightened—
"It is more blessed to give than receive."
Growing old happily,
Blest, we believe.

Eyes that grow dim to the earth and its glory
See but the brighter the heavenly glow!
Ears that are dull to the world and its story
Drink in the songs that from Paradise flow;
All their sweet recompense
Youth cannot know.

Fourscore! But softly the years have swept by thee,
Touching thee lightly with tenderest care;
Sorrow and death they did often bring nigh thee,
Yet they have left thee but beauty to wear.
Growing old gracefully,
Graceful and fair.

WORDS OF A POET.

If a pilgrim has been shaded
By a tree that I have nursed;
If a can of clear cold water,
I have raised to lips athirst;
If I've planted one sweet flower
By an else too barren way;
If I've whispered in the midnight
One sweet word to tell of day;
If in one poor bleeding bosom
I a woe-swept chord have stilled;
If a dark and restless spirit
I with hope of heaven have filled;
If I've made for life's hard battle
One faint heart grow brave and strong,
Then, my God, I thank Thee, bless Thee,
For the precious gift of song.

WHEN?

If I were told that I must die to-morrow,
That the next sun
Which sinks should bear me past all fear and sorrow
For any one,
All the fight fought, all the short journey through,
What should I do?

I do not think that I should shrink or falter,
But just go on,
Doing my work, nor change nor seek to alter
Aught that has gone;
But rise and move and love and smile and pray
For one more day.

And, lying down at night for a last sleeping,
Say in that ear
Which harkens ever: "Lord, within Thy keeping
How should I fear?
And, when to-morrow brings Thee nearer still,
Do Thou Thy will."

I might not sleep for awe; but peaceful, tender,
My soul would lie

All the night long; and when the morning splendor
Flushed o'er the sky,
I think that I could smile—could calmly say,
"It is His day."

But if a wondrous hand from the blue, yonder,
Held out a scroll,
On which my life was writ, and I with wonder
Beheld unroll
To a long century's end its mystic clue,
What should I do?

What *could* I do, O blessed Guide and Master,
Other than this:
Still to go on as now, not slower, faster,
Nor fear to miss
The road, although so very long it be,
While led by Thee?

Step after step, feeling Thee close beside me,
Although unseen,
Through thorns, through flowers, whether the tempest hide Thee,
Or heavens serene,
Assured Thy faithfulness cannot betray,
Thy love decay.

I may not know, my God, no hand revealeth
Thy counsels wise;
Along the path a deepening shadow stealeth,
No voice replies
To all my questioning thought, the time to tell,
And it is well.

Let me keep on, abiding and unfearing
Thy will always,
Through a long century's ripening fruition,
Or a short day's.
Thou canst not come too soon; and I can wait,
If Thou come late.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

WASTED TIME.

ALONE in the dark and silent night,
With the heavy thought of a vanished year,
When evil deeds come back to sight,
And good deeds rise with a welome cheer;
Alone with the spectres of the past,
That come with the old year's dying chime,
There glooms one shadow, dark and vast,
The shadow of Wasted Time.

The chances of happiness cast away,
The opportunities never sought,
The good resolves that every day
Have died in the impotence of thought;
The slow advance and the backward step
In the rugged path we have striven to climb;
How they furrow the brow and pale the lip
When we talk with Wasted Time!

What are we now? What had we been
Had we hoarded time with the miser's gold,
Striving our honest meed to win,
Through the summer's heat and the winter's cold;
Shrinking from naught that the world could do;
Fearing naught but the touch of crime;
Laboring, struggling, all seasons through,
And knowing no Wasted Time?

Who shall recall the vanished years?
Who shall hold back this ebbing tide
That leaves us remorse, and shame, and tears,
And washes away all things beside?
Who shall give us the strength e'en now
To leave forever this holiday rhyme;
To shake off this sloth from heart and brow,
And battle with Wasted Time?

The years that pass come not again,
The things that die no life renew;
But e'en from the rust of his cankering chain
A golden truth is glimmering through;
That to him who learns from errors past,
And turns away with strength sublime,
And makes each year outdo the last,
There is no Wasted Time.

THE WRECK OF THE POCAHONTAS.

Celia Thaxter, the author of the following poem, often assisted her father, who had charge of the light-house on one of the Isles of Shoals, off the coast of New Hampshire.

I LIT the lamps in the light-house tower,
For the sun dropped down and the day was dead,
They shone like a glorious clustered flower,
Ten golden and five red.

Looking across, where the line of coast
Stretched darkly, shrinking away from the sea,
The lights sprang out at its edge,—almost
They seemed to answer me.

O warning lights, burn bright and clear,
Hither the storm comes! Leagues way

It moans and thunders low and drear,—
Burn till the break of day!

Good night! I called to the gulls that sailed
Slow past me thro' the evening sky;
And my comrades, answering shrilly, hailed
Me back with boding cry.

A mournful breeze began to blow,
Weird music it drew thro' the iron bars,
The sullen billows boiled below,
And dimly peered the stars;

The sails that flecked the ocean floor
From east to west, leaned low, and fled;
They knew what came in the distant roar
That filled the air with dread!

Flung by a fitful gust, there beat
Against the window a dash of rain,
Steady as tramp of marching feet
Strode on the hurricane.

It smote the waves for a moment still,
Level and deadly white for fear;
The bare rock shuddered,—an awful thrill
Shook even my tower of cheer.

Like all the demons loosed at last,
Whistling and shrieking, wild and wide,
The mad wind raged, and strong and fast
Rolled in the rising tide.

And soon in ponderous showers the spray,
Struck from the granite, reared and sprung,
And touched at tower and cottage grey,
Where overwhelmed they clung

Half drowning to the naked rock;
But still burned on the faithful light,
Nor faltered at the tempest's shock,
Through all the fearful night.

Was it in vain? That knew not we,
We seemed, in that confusion vast
Of rushing wind and roaring sea,
One point whereon was cast

The whole Atlantic's weight of brine.
Heaven help the ship should drift our way!
No matter how the light might shine
Far on into the day.

When morning dawned above the din
Of gale and breaker, boomed a gun!

Another! We who sat within,
Answered with cries each one.

Into each other's eyes with fear
We looked thro' helpless tears, as still,
One after one, near and more near,
The signals pealed, until

The thick storm seemed to break apart,
To show us, staggering to her grave,
The fated brig. We had no heart
To look, for naught could save!

One glimpse of black hull, heaving slow,
Then closed the mists o'er canvass torn
And tangled ropes, swept to and fro
From masts that raked forlorn.

Weeks after, yet ringed round with spray,
Our island lay, and none might land;
Though blue the waters of the bay
Stretched calm on either hand.

And when at last from the distant shore
A little boat stole out to reach
Our loneliness, and bring once more
Fresh human thought and speech,

We told our tale, and the boatman cried
"'Twas the Pocahontas,—all were lost!
For miles along the coast the tide
Her shattered timbers tost."

Then I looked the whole horizon round,—
So beautiful the ocean spread
About us, o'er those sailors drowned!
"Father in Heaven," I said,

A child's grief struggling in my breast,
"Do purposely thy creatures meet
Such bitter death? How was it best
These hearts should cease to beat?

"O, wherefore! Are we naught to thee?
Like senseless weeds that rise and fall
Upon thine awful sea, are we
No more then, after all?"

And I shut the beauty from my sight,
For I thought of the dead that lay below;
From the bright air faded the warmth and light,
And there came a chill like snow.

Then I heard the far-off rote resound,
Where the breakers slow and slumberous rolled,

And a subtle sense of thought profound
Touched me with power untold.

And like a voice eternal spake
That wondrous rhythm, and "Peace be still,"
It murmured; "bow thy head, and take
Life's rapture and life's ill,

And wait. At last all shall be clear."
The long, low, mellow music rose
And fell, and soothed my dreaming ear
With infinite repose.

Sighing, I climbed the light-house stair,
Half forgetting my grief and pain;
And while the day died, sweet and fair,
I lit the lamps again.

TO A——.

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these."—MATT. vi, 28, 29.

MAIDEN, with thy upturned vision,
And thy high aspiring thought,

Always longing for perfection,
Sorrowing that thou find'st it not;

Ever keep that goal before thee;
'Tis the way the best have gone;
Let it, like the far horizon,
Ever lure thee, on and on.

Wouldst thou know what *is* perfection?
Know what *God* pronounces good?
Ask the lily, it shall teach thee,
As the sun expands its bud.

He who gives each little flow'ret
Leaf and bud and tender shoot,
All that may expand its blossom,
All that nourishes its root;

Will He not, O, how much rather,
Make thee of His bounty share?
Ah! He will, if, like the lily,
Thou wilt grow beneath His care.

Toil not, then, but let Him clothe thee,
Let Him form thee by His power;
In *thy own perfected nature*,
Thou wilt praise Him like the flower.

Though the lily's simple beauty
Far surpasses regal pride,
Yet it shadows forth but faintly
That of spirits purified.

S.

THE WATER-MILL.

Oh! listen to the Water-Mill, through all the live-long day,
As the clicking of the wheel wears hour by hour away;
How languidly the Autumn wind doth stir the withered leaves,
As on the field the reapers sing, while binding up the sheaves;
A solemn proverb strikes my mind, and as a spell is cast,
"The mill will never grind again with water that is past."

Soft Summer winds revive no more leaves strewn o'er earth and main,
The sickle never more will reap the yellow-garnered grain.

The rippling stream flows ever on, aye tranquil, deep and still,
But never glideth back again to busy Water-Mill.
The solemn proverb speaks to all, with meaning deep and vast,
"The mill will never grind again with water that is past."

Oh! clasp the proverb to thy soul, dear loving heart and true,
For golden years are fleeting by, and youth is passing too;
Ah! learn to make the most of life, nor lose one happy day,
For time will ne'er return sweet joys, neglected, thrown away;
Nor leave one tender word unsaid, thy kindness sown broad-cast;
"The mill will never grind again with water that is past."

Oh! the wasted hours of life, that have swiftly drifted by;
Alas! the good we might have done, all gone without a sigh;

Love that we might once have saved by a single
kindly word,
Thoughts conceived but ne'er expressed, perishing
unpenned, unheard.
Oh! take the lesson to thy soul, forever clasp it fast,
"The mill will never grind again with water that is
past."

Work on while yet the sun doth shine, thou man of
strength and will,
The streamlet ne'er doth useless glide by clicking
water-mill:
Nor wait until to-morrow's light beams brightly on
thy way,
For all that thou canst call thine own lies in the
phrase, *to-day*.
Possessions, power, and blooming health, must all be
lost at last,
"The mill will never grind again with water that is
past."

Oh! love thy God and fellow-man, thyself consider
last,
For come it will when thou must scan dark errors of
the past;

Soon will this fight of life be o'er, and earth recede
from view,
And Heaven in all its glory shine where all is pure
and true.
Ah! then thou'll see more clearly still the proverb
deep and vast,
"The mill will never grind again with water that is
past."

D. C. McCallum.

MY BOOKS.

Ah! well I love these books of mine,
That stand so trimly on their shelves,
With here and there a broken line
(Fat "quartos" jostling modest "twelves"),
A curious company, I own;
The poorest ranking with their betters:
In brief—a thing almost unknown—
A Pure Democracy—of Letters.

A motley gathering are they;
Some fairly worth their weight in gold;
Some just too good to throw away;
Some scarcely worth the place they hold.

Yet well I love them, one and all,
These friends so meek and unobtrusive,
Who never fail to come at call,
Nor (if I scold them) turn abusive!

If I have favorites here and there,
And, like a monarch, pick and choose,
I never meet an angry stare
That *this* I take and *that* refuse;
No discords rise my soul to vex
Among these peaceful book-relations,
Nor envious strife of age or sex
To mar my quiet lucubrations.

And they have still another merit,
Which otherwhere one vainly seeks,
Whate'er may be an author's spirit,
He never *uninvited* speaks;
And should he prove a fool or clown,
Unworth the precious time you're spending,
How quickly you can "put him down,"
Or "shut him up," without offending.

Here—pleasing sight!—the touchy brood
Of critics from dissension cease,
And—stranger still!—no more at feud,
Polemics smile, and keep the peace.

See! side by side, all free from strife
(Save what the heavy page may smother),
The gentle "Christians" who, in life,
For conscience' sake had burned each other.

I call them friends, these quiet books,
And well the title they may claim,
Who always give me cheerful looks
(What living friend has done the same?)
And, for companionship, how few,
As these, my cronies, ever-present,
Of all the friends I ever knew,
Have been so useful and so pleasant?

J. G. SAXE.

EVENING.

THE breath of spring-time, at this twilight hour,
Comes through the gathering gloom,
And bears the stolen sweets of many a flower
Into my silent room.

Where hast thou wandered, gentle gale, to find
The perfumes thou dost bring?
By brooks that through the wakening meadows wind,
Or brink of rushy spring?

Or woodside, where, in little companies
The early wild flowers rise,
Or sheltered lawn, where, mid encircling trees,
May's warmest sunshine lies?

Now sleeps the humming-bird, that, in the sun,
Wandered from bloom to bloom;
Now, too, the weary bee, his day's work done,
Rests in his waxen room.

Now every hovering insect to his place
Beneath the leaves hath flown;
And, through the long night hours, the flowery race
Are left to thee alone.

O'er the pale blossoms of the sassafras,
And o'er the spice-bush spray,
Among the open buds thy breathings pass,
And come embalmed away.

Yet there is sadness in thy soft caress,
Wind of the blooming year!
The gentle presence, that was wont to bless
Thy coming, is not here.

Go, then; and yet I bid thee not repair,
Thy gathered sweets to shed

Where pine and willow, in the evening air,
Sigh o'er the buried dead.

Pass on to homes where cheerful voices sound,
And cheerful looks are cast,
And where thou wakest, in thine airy round,
No sorrow of the past.

And whisper, everywhere, that earth renews
Her beautiful array,
Amid the darkness and the gathering dews,
For the return of day.

W. C. BRYANT.

THE OTHER WORLD.

IT lies around us like a cloud—
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.

Its gentle breezes fan our cheek;
Amid our worldly cares,
Its gentle voices whisper love,
And mingle with our prayers.

Sweet hearts around us throb and beat,
Sweet helping hands are stirred
And palpitates the veil between
With breathings almost heard.

The silence—awful, sweet and calm—
They have no power to break;
For mortal words are not for them
To utter or partake.

So thin, so soft, so sweet they glide,
So near to press they seem—
They seem to lull us to our rest,
And melt into our dream.

And in the hush of rest they bring,
'Tis easy now to see,
How lovely and how sweet a pass
The hour of death may be;

To close the eye, and close the ear,
Wrapped in a trance of bliss,
And gently laid in loving arms,
To swoon to that—from this;

Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,
Scarce asking where we are;

To feel all evil sink away,
All sorrow and all care.

Sweet souls around us, watch us still!
Press nearer to our side!
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
With gentle helpings glide!

Let death between us be as naught—
A dried and vanished stream!
Your joy be the reality,
Our suffering life the dream.

H. B. STOWE.

EVERY DAY.

OH, trifling tasks so often done,
Yet ever to be done anew!
Oh, cares which come with every sun,
Morn after morn, the long years through!
We shrink beneath their paltry sway,—
The irksome calls of every day.

The restless sense of wasted power,
The tiresome round of little things,
Are hard to bear, as hour by hour
Its tedious iteration brings;

Who shall evade or who delay
The small demands of every day?

The boulder in the torrent's course
By tide and tempest lashed in vain,
Obeys the wave-whirled pebble's force,
And yields its substance grain by grain;
So crumble strongest lives away
Beneath the war of every day.

Who finds the lion in his lair,
Who tracks the tiger for his life,
May wound them ere they are aware,
Or conquer them in desperate strife,
Yet powerless he to scathe or slay
The vexing gnats of every day.

The steady strain that never stops
Is mightier than the fiercest shock;
The constant fall of water-drops
Will groove the adamantine rock;
We feel our noblest powers decay
In feeble wars with every day.

We rise to meet a heavy blow—
Our souls a sudden bravery fills—
But we endure not always so
The drop by drop of little ills;

We still deplore and still obey
The hard behests of every day.

The heart which boldly faces death
Upon the battle-field, and dares
Cannon and bayonet, faints beneath
The needle-points of frets and cares;
The stoutest spirit they dismay—
The tiny stings of every day.

And even saints of holy fame,
Whose souls by faith have overcome,
Who wore amid the cruel flame
The molten crown of martyrdom,
Bore not without complaint alway
The petty pains of every day.

Ah, more than martyr's aureole,
And more than hero's heart of fire,
We need the humble strength of soul
Which daily toils and ills require;—
Sweet Patience! grant us, if you may,
An added grace for every day!

E. A. ALLEN.

THE BROAD CREED.

TRUTH is one;
And in all lands beneath the sun,
Whoso hath eyes to see may see
The tokens of its unity.
No scroll of creed its fullness warps,
We trace it not by school-boy maps,
Free as the sun and air it is
Of latitude and boundaries.
In Vedic verse, in dull Koran,
Are messages of good to man;
The angels to our Aryan sires
Talked by the earliest household fires.

Nor doth it lessen what he taught,
Or make the gospel Jesus brought
Less precious, that His lips retold
Some portion of that truth of old;
Denying not the proven seers,
The tested wisdom of the years;
Confirming with his own impress
The common law of righteousness.
We search the world for truth; we cull

The good, the pure, the beautiful
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old flower-fields of the soul;
And, weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from the quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the book our mothers read.
And all our treasure of old thought
In His harmonious fullness wrought,
Who gathers in a sheaf complete
The scattered blades of God's own wheat,
The common growth that maketh good
His all-embracing Fatherhood.
Wherever through the ages rise
The altars of self-sacrifice;
Where love its arms has opened wide,
Or man for man has calmly died,
I see the same white wings outspread
That hovered o'er the Master's head!
I trace His presence in the blind
Pathetic gropings of my kind—
In prayers for sin and sorrow wrung,
In cradle hymns of life they sung,
Each in its measure, but a part
Of the unmeasured Over Heart:

And with a stronger faith confess
The greater that it owns the less.

Nor fear I aught that science brings
From searching through material things;
Content to let its glasses prove,
Not by the letter's oldness move
The myriad worlds on worlds that course
The spaces of the universe;
Since everywhere the spirit walks
The garden of the heart and talks
With man, as under Eden's trees,
In all its varied languages.
Why mourn above some hopeless flaw
In the stone tables of the law,
When Scripture every day afresh
Is traced on tables of the flesh?
By inward sense, by outward signs,
God's presence still the heart divines!
Through deepest joy of Him we learn,
In sorest grief to Him we turn,
And reason stoops its pride to share
The child-like instinct of a prayer.

J. G. WHITTIER.

INSPIRATION.

LIFE of Ages, richly poured,
Love of God, unspent and free,
Flowing in the prophet's word
And the people's liberty!

Never was to chosen race
That unstinted tide confined;
Thine is every time and place,
Fountain sweet of heart and mind!

Secret of the morning stars,
Motion of the oldest hours,
Pledge through elemental wars
Of the coming spirit's powers!

Rolling planet, flaming sun,
Stand in nobler man complete;
Prescient laws thine errands run,
Frame the shrine for Godhead meet.

Homeward led, the wondering eye
Upward yearned in joy or awe,

Found the love that waited nigh,
  Guidance of thy guardian law.

In the touch of earth it thrilled;
  Down from mystic skies it burned;
Right obeyed and passion stilled
  Its eternal gladness earned.

Breathing in the thinker's creed,
  Pulsing in the hero's blood,
Nerving simplest thought and deed,
  Freshening time with truth and good,

Consecrating art and song,
  Holy book and pilgrim track,
Hurling floods of tyrant wrong
  From the sacred limits back.

Life of Ages, richly poured,
  Love of God, unspent and free,
Flow still in the prophet's word
  And the people's liberty!

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

MIDSUMMER.

AROUND this lovely valley rise
The purple hills of Paradise.

Oh, softly on yon banks of haze
Her rosy face the Summer lays!

Becalmed along the azure sky,
The argosies of cloudland lie,
Whose shores, with many a shining rift,
Far off their pearl-white peaks uplift.

Through all the long midsummer day
The meadow-sides are sweet with hay.
I seek the coolest sheltered seat
Just where the field and forest meet,—
Where grow the pine-trees tall and bland,
The ancient oaks austere and grand,
And fringy roots and pebbles fret
The ripples of the rivulet.

I watch the mowers as they go
Through the tall grass, a white-sleeved row;
With even stroke their scythes they swing,
In tune their merry whetstones ring;

Behind the nimble youngsters run
And toss the thick swaths in the sun;
The cattle graze; while, warm and still,
Slopes the broad pasture, basks the hill,
And bright, when summer breezes break,
The green wheat crinkles like a lake.

The butterfly and humble-bee
Come to the pleasant woods with me;
Quickly before me runs the quail,
The chickens skulk behind the rail,
High up the lone wood-pigeon sits,
And the woodpecker pecks and flits.
Sweet woodland music sinks and swells,
The brooklet rings its tinkling bells,
The swarming insects drone and hum,
The partridge beats his throbbing drum,
The squirrel leaps among the boughs,
And chatters in his leafy house.
The oriole flashes by; and, look!
Into the mirror of the brook,
Where the vain blue-bird trims his coat,
Two tiny feathers fall and float.

As silently, as tenderly,
The down of peace descends on me.

Oh, this is peace! I have no need
Of friend to talk, of book to read;
A dear Companion here abides;
Close to my thrilling heart He hides;
The holy silence is His Voice;
I lie and listen, and rejoice.

EMERSON.

RUTH.

WHAT shall be the baby's name?
Shall we catch from sounding fame
Some far-echoed word of praise
Out of other climes or days?
Put upon her brows new-born
Crowns that other brows have worn?

Shall we take some dearer word,
Once within our circle heard,
Cherished yet, though spoken less,—
Shall we lay its tenderness
On the baby's little head,
So to call again our dead?

Shall we choose a name of grace
That befits the baby's face,—

Something full of childish glee,
To be spoken joyously?
Something sweeter, softer yet,
That shall say, "Behold our pet!"

Nay; the history of the great
Must not weigh our baby's fate;—
Nay; the dear ones disenthralled
Must not be by us recalled;
We shall meet them soon again—
Let us keep their names till then!

Nay; we do not seek a word
For a kitten or a bird;
Not to suit the baby-ways,
But to wear in after days,—
Fit for uses grave and good,
Wrapped in future womanhood—

For the mother's loving tongue
While our daughter still is young;
For the manly lips that may
Call the maiden heart away;
For the time yet tenderer,
When her children think of her.

Let us choose a Bible name,
One that always bides the same,
Sacred, sweet, in every land
All men's reverence to command;
For our earthly uses given,
Nathless, musical in heaven!

One I know, these names amid—
"Beauty" is its meaning hid;
She who wore it, made it good
With her gracious womanhood.
Name for virtue, love and truth!
Let us call the baby *Ruth*.

THE CALL OF THE CHRISTIAN.

Not always as the whirlwind's rush
On Horeb's mount of fear,
Not always as the burning bush
To Midian's shepherd seer,
Nor as the awful voice which came
To Israel's prophet bards,
Nor as the tongues of cloven flame,
Nor gift of fearful words.

Not always thus, with outward sign
Of fire or voice from Heaven,
The message of a truth divine,
The call of God is given!
Awaking in the human heart
Love for the true and right,—
Zeal for the Christian's "better part,"
Strength for the Christian's fight.

Nor unto manhood's heart alone
The holy influence steals;
Warm with a rapture not its own,
The heart of woman feels!
As she who by Samaria's well
The Saviour's errand sought,—
As those who with the fervent Paul
And meek Aquila wrought:

On those meek ones whose martyrdom
Rome's gathered grandeur saw;
Or those who in their Alpine home,
Braved the Crusader's war,
When the green Vaudois, trembling, heard,
Through all its vales of death,
The martyr's song of triumph poured
From woman's failing breath.

And gently, by a thousand things
Which o'er our spirits pass,
Like breezes o'er the harp's fine strings,
Or vapors o'er a glass,
Leaving their token strange and new
Of music or of shade,
The summons to the right and true
And merciful is made.

O, then, if gleams of truth and light
Flash o'er thy waiting mind,
Unfolding to thy mental sight
The wants of human-kind;
If, brooding over human grief,
The earnest wish is known,
To soothe and gladden with relief
An anguish not thine own;

Though heralded with naught of fear,
Or outward sign or show;
Though only to the inward ear
It whispers soft and low;
Though dropping as the manna fell,
Unseen, yet from above,
Noiseless as dew-fall, heed it well,—
Thy Father's call of love.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

BEREAVEMENT.

"All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."—Ps. xlii, 7.

Around me "thy billows" roll,
Beneath is the shifting sand,
Over me breaks the tempest,
Afar is the solid land.

Out in the fathomless night
I reach, with imploring cry,—
Only the baffling waters,
Only the breakers are nigh.

Surely, the Master will know;
Surely, amidst the wild storm,
Walking the waves, as of old,
I shall see His glorious form;—

Shall hear His sweet words of hope,
Shall feel the grasp of His hand,
Lifting my burthen of grief,
Bearing me safe to the land!

He comes! He is near to help,
But not as *I* prayed. *His* will,
Not mine, is ruling the storm,
And bidding the waves, "Be still."

. . . . .

Far over the wreck-strewn shore
Creeps slowly the dawning gray,
But gone from my life, the joy
That gladdened the coming day.

The blue of the bending sky
Lies calm, on a peaceful sea;
The breath of the morning brings
Nor calmness nor peace for me.

I gather, with aching heart,
The fragments,—an empty chair,
A rose-bud that touched her hand,
A lock of her raven hair,—

A soft flaxen curl—her own,
Reminder of baby ways;
A locket and chain of gold,
My gift in the bridal days.

A picture, sun-penciled and fair,
That caught with marvelous grace,
The light of her beaming eye,—
The smile of her radiant face;

A mound on a flowery slope,
Where the evening sunbeams fall;
Not a year of wedded bliss,—
And *these* are my all—my all!

Not all! In the heavenly home,
Safe housed from the storms of life,
Watching and waiting for me,
Is my love—my spirit-wife!

The days, as they wear along
Over life's storm-troubled sea,
Nearer and nearer, sweet wife,
Are bringing me home to thee.

L. J. R.

TO LABOR IS TO PRAY.

PAUSE not to dream of the future before us;
Pause not to weep the wild cares that come o'er us;
Hark how Creation's deep, musical chorus,
Unintermitting goes up into heaven!
Never the ocean wave falters in flowing;
Never the little seed stops in its growing;
More and more richly the rose heart keeps glowing,
Till from its nourishing stem it is riven.

"Labor is worship!" the robin is singing;
"Labor is worship!" the wild bee is ringing;
Listen! that eloquent whisper, upspringing,
Speaks to thy soul from out nature's great heart.
From the dark cloud flows the life-giving shower;
From the rough sod blows the soft breathing flower;
From the small insect the rich coral bower;
Only man, in the plan, shrinks from his part.

Labor is Life! 'Tis the still water faileth;
Idleness ever despaireth, bewaileth,
Keep the watch wound, or the dark rust assaileth;
Flowers droop and die in the stillness of noon.

Labor is glory!—the flying cloud lightens;
Only the waving wing changes and brightens,
Idle hearts only the dark future frightens,
Play the sweet keys, wouldst thou keep them in tune!

Labor is rest—from the sorrows that greet us;
Rest from all petty vexations that meet us;
Rest from sin-promptings that ever entreat us;
Rest from world-sirens that lure us to ill.
Work,—and pure slumbers will wait on thy pillow;
Work,—thou shalt ride over care's coming billow;
Lie not down 'neath Woe's weeping willow;
Work with a stout heart and resolute will!

Labor is health! Lo, the husbandman reaping,
How through his veins goes the life-current leaping!
How his strong arm in its stalwart pride sweeping,
True as a sunbeam the swift sickle guides.
Labor is wealth,—in the sea the pearl groweth;
Rich the queen's robe from the cocoon floweth;
From the fine acorn the strong forest bloweth;
Temple and statue the marble block hides.

Droop not! though shame, sin and anguish are round thee!
Bravely fling off the cold chain that hath bound thee!

Look to the pure heaven smiling beyond thee!
Rest not content in thy darkness,—a clod;
Work for some good, be it ever so slowly;
Cherish some flower, be it ever so lowly;
Labor! all labor is noble and holy;
Let thy great deed be thy prayer to thy God!

FRANCES S. OSGOOD.

MY BIRTH-DAY.

BENEATH the moonlight and the snow
Lies dead my latest year;
The winter winds are wailing low
Its dirges in my ear.

I grieve not with the moaning wind
As if a loss befell;
Before me, even as behind,
God is, and all is well!

His light shines on me from above,
His low voice speaks within,—
The patience of immortal love
Outwearying mortal sin.

Not mindless of the growing years
Of care and loss and pain,
My eyes are wet with thankful tears
For blessings which remain.

If dim the gold of life has grown,
I will not count it dross,
Nor turn from treasures still my own,
To sigh for lack and loss.

The years no charm from Nature take;
As sweet her voices call,
As beautiful her mornings break,
As fair her evenings fall.

Love watches o'er my quiet ways,
Kind voices speak my name,
And lips that find it hard to praise
Are slow, at least, to blame.

How softly ebb the tides of will!
How fields, once lost or won,
Now lie behind me green and still
Beneath a level sun!

How hushed the hiss of party hate,
The clamor of the throng!

How old, harsh voices of debate
Flow into rhythmic song!

Methinks the spirit's temper grows
Too soft in this still air;
Somewhat the restful heart foregoes
Of needed watch and prayer.

The bark by tempest vainly tossed
May founder in the calm,
And he who braved the polar frost
Faint by the isles of balm.

Better than self-indulgent years
The outflung heart of youth,
Than pleasant songs in idle years
The tumult of the truth.

Rest for the weary hands is good,
And love for hearts that pine,
But let the manly habitude
Of upright souls be mine.

Let winds that blow from heaven refresh,
Dear Lord, the languid air;
And let the weakness of the flesh
Thy strength of spirit share.

And, if the eye must fail of light,
The ear forget to hear,
Make clearer still the spirit's sight,
More fine the inward ear!

Be near me in mine hours of need
To soothe or cheer, or warn,
And down these slopes of sunset lead
As up the hills of morn!

J. G. WHITTIER.

REJOICING IN GOD.

THE bird not always mounteth on the wing,
Nor doth he always his sweet music pour;
But, as he silent on the branch doth swing,
He ever *ready* is to sing or soar.

The music heard not lingers on his tongue;
His flight is poising ere it upward rise;
Thus shall his sudden harp of joy be strung,
And thou shalt see him mounting to the skies.

Oh, Christian, be it ever thus with thee,
When, sitting here, thou with the earth dost blend;

Still, as we mark thee, let us always see
Thou hast a wing just poising to ascend,—
And that the song which hath no outward voice,
Still, in the inward soul, fails never to rejoice.

T. C. UPHAM.

LITTLE STREAMS.

LITTLE streams are light and shadow;
Flowing through the pasture meadow;
Flowing by the green way-side,
Through the forest dim and wide,
Through the hamlet still and small—
By the cottage, by the hall,
By the ruin'd abbey still,
Turning here and there a mill,
Bearing tribute to the river—
Little streams, I love you ever.

Summer music is there flowing—
Flowering plants in them are growing;
Happy life is in them all,
Creatures innocent and small;
Little birds come down to drink,
Fearless of their leafy brink;

Noble trees beside them grow,
Glooming them with branches low;
And between, the sunshine, glancing
In their little waves, is dancing.

Little streams have flowers a many
Beautiful and fair as any;
Typha strong, and green bur-reed:
Willow-herb, with cotton-seed;
Arrow-head, with eye of jet;
And the water-violet.
There the flowering rush you meet,
And the plumy meadow-sweet;
And, in places deep and stilly,
Marble-like, the water-lily.

Little streams, their voices cheery,
Sound forth welcomes to the weary,
Flowing on from day to day,
Without stint and without stay;
Here, upon their flowery bank,
In the old time pilgrims drank—
Here have seen, as now, pass by,
Kingfisher, and dragon-fly;
Those bright things that have their dwelling,
Where the little streams are welling.

Down in valleys green and lowly,
Murmuring not and gliding slowly;
Up in mountain-hollows wild,
Fretting like a peevish child;
Through the hamlet, where all day
In their waves the children play;
Running west, or running east,
Doing good to man and beast—
Always giving, weary never,
Little streams, I love you ever.

MARY HOWITT.

A HOME.

WHAT is a home? A guarded space
Wherein a few, unfairly blest,
Shall sit together face to face,
And bask and purr and be at rest?

Where cushioned walls rise up between
Its inmates and the common air,
The common pain, and pad and screen
From blows of Fate or winds of care?

Where Art may blossom strong and free,
And Pleasure furl her silken wing,

And every laden moment be
A precious and peculiar thing?

And past and future, softly veiled
In hiding mists, shall float and lie,
Forgotten half and unassailed
By either hope or memory,

While the luxuriant Present weaves
Her perfumed spells untried, untrue,
Broiders her garments, heaps her sheaves,
All for the pleasure of a few?

Can it be this,—the longed-for thing
Which wanders on the restless foam,
Unsheltered beggars, birds on wing,
Aspire to, dream of, christen "Home?"

No. Art may bloom, and peace and bliss;
Grief may refrain and Death forget;
But if there be no more than this,
The soul of home is wanting yet.

Dim image from far glory caught,
Fair type of fairer things to be,
The true home rises in our thought
As beacon for all men to see.

Its lamps burn freely in the night;
Its fire-glows unchidden shed
Their cheering and abounding light
On homeless folk uncomforted.

Each sweet and sacred thing within
Gives out a fragrance on the air,—
A thankful breath, sent forth to win
A little smile from others' care.

The few, they bask in closer heat;
The many catch the farther ray;
Life higher seems, the world more sweet,
And hope and heaven less far away.

So the old miracle anew
Is wrought on earth and provéd good;
And crumbs apportioned for a few,
God-blessed, suffice a multitude.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

RIGHT LIVING.

DEEPER than all sense of seeing
Lies the secret source of being,
And the soul, with truth agreeing,
  Learns to live in thoughts and deeds.
For the life is more than raiment,
And the earth is pledged for payment
  Unto man for all his needs.

Nature is our common mother,
Every living man our brother;
Therefore let us serve each other,
  Not to meet the laws' behests,
But because through cheerful giving
We shall learn the art of living,
  And to live and serve is best.

Life is more than what man fancies,
Not a game of idle chances,
But it steadily advances
  Up the rugged heights of time,
Till each complex world of trouble,
Every sad hope's broken bubble,
  Hath a meaning most sublime.

More of practice, less profession,
More of firmness, less concession,
More of freedom, less oppression,
In the church and in the state;
More of life, and less of fashion,
More of love, and less of passion,
That will make us good and great.

When true hearts, divinely gifted,
From the chaff of error sifted,
On their crosses are uplifted,
Shall the world most clearly see
That earth's greatest time of trial
Calls for holy self-denial,
Calls on men to do and be.

But forever and forever
Let it be the soul's endeavor
Love from hatred to dissever,
And in whatsoe'er we do,
Won by truth's eternal beauty
To our highest sense of duty,
Evermore be firm and true.

PASSING PLEASURES.

THESE blessed passing pleasures;
We need not let them waste;
We need not leave their treasures
Behind us in our haste.
We need not doubt their fitness
Where earth's deep shadows fall;
God giving, He is witness
That we shall want them all.

Amid the old sad story
Of human shame and sin,
If He gives gleams of glory,
We ought to let them in.
And oh, when brought before us
Where heart and soul can see,
How mighty to restore us
Love's little signs may be!

A bird, a tree, a flower,
A creature just as frail,
Will take us in His power
To Him within the veil;

Will come, if He has bidden,
  Amidst the dark'ning fight,
And leave us safely hidden
  Behind a shield of light.

Perhaps His angels see us
  Disquieted in vain;
Perhaps His watch would free us
  From some ensnaring pain;
But only He can measure,
  Who sees our nature through,
The good that in His pleasure
  A passing joy may do.

If but for one bright minute
  Through gathering clouds it break,
There is a token in it
  That He would have us take.
And His least sign obeying,
  No wealth our hearts shall miss,
E'en when we hear Him saying,
  "See greater things than this."

For He, the dull ear gaining,
  Meeting the dim, weak sight,
Our faith is gently training
  To bear the perfect light.'

And, while His mercies guide us,
We, in one sure belief,
May trust the joy beside us,
E'en as we trust the grief.

A. L. WARING.

THE BOYS.

THERE come the boys! Oh dear, the noise,
The whole house feels the racket;
Behold the knee of Harry's pants,
And weep o'er Berdie's jacket!

But never mind, if eyes keep bright,
And limbs grow straight and limber;
We'd rather lose the tree's whole bark
Than find unsound the timber.

Now hear the tops and marbles roll!
The floors—oh, woe betide them!
And I must watch the banisters,
For I know boys who ride them!

Look well as you descend the stairs,
I often find them haunted

By ghostly toys that make no noise
Just when their noise is wanted.

The very chairs are tied in pairs,
And made to prance and caper;
What swords are whittled out of sticks!
What brave hats made of paper!

The dinner bell peals loud and well,
To tell the milkman's coming;
And then the rush of "steam-car trains"
Sets all our ears a-humming.

How oft I say, "What shall I do
To keep these children quiet?"
If I could find a good receipt
I certainly should try it.

But what to do with these wild boys
And all their din and clatter,
Is really quite a grave affair—
No laughing, trifling matter.

"Boys will be boys"—but not for long;
Ah, could we bear about us
This thought—how very soon our boys
Will learn to do without us,

How soon that tall and deep-voiced man
Will gravely call us "Mother";
Or we be stretching empty hands
From this world to the other,

More gently we should chide the noise,
And when night quells the racket,
Stitch in but loving thoughts and prayers
While mending pants and jacket!

THE aged Christian stands upon the shore
Of time, a storehouse of experience,
Filled with the treasures of rich heavenly lore.
I love to sit and hear him draw from thence
Sweet recollections of his journey past,
A journey crowned with blessings to the last.

WORDSWORTH.

THE OLDEST STORY.

UNDER the coverlet's snowy fold
The tiniest stir that ever was seen,
And the tiniest sound, as if fairy folk
Were cuddling under a leaf, I ween.

That is the Baby; he came to town
Only a day or two ago;
But he looks as wise as if he knew
All that a baby can ever know.

There he lies in a little heap,
As soft as velvet, as warm as toast;
As rosy-red as the harvest-moon
Which I saw so big on the hazy coast.

Hear him gurgle and sputter, and sigh,
As if his dear little heart would break,
And scold away as if all the world
Were only meant for his littleness' sake.

Blink, little eyes, at the strange new light;
Hark, little ears, at the strange new sound;

Wonderful things shall you see and hear,
As the days and the months and the years go round.

Hardly you seem a Life at all;
Only a Something with hands and feet;
Only a Feeling that things are warm;
Only a Longing for something to eat.

Have you a thought in your downy head?
Can you say to yourself so much as "I"?
Have you found out yet that you *are* yourself?
Has God what you will be by-and-by?

It's only a little that we can guess,
But it's quite as much as we care to know;
The rest will come with the fleeting years,
Little by little, and better so.

Enough for the day is the good thereof;
The speck of a thing that is lying there,
And the presence that fills the silent house
With the tender hush of a voiceless prayer.

J. W. CHADWICK.

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT.

I HAVE one creed, and that is ever duty;
I have one law, and that is always love;
I seek one grace, and that, the fadeless beauty
Of holiness, and trust that looks above.

I have one faith, and that I hold with meekness,
In simple truth, whose might, O Lord, is thine;
I have one hope, that what I do in weakness
May be confirmed with God's own strength divine.

I find one joy, and that in serving others;
I know one peace, and that a conscience pure;
I love one fellowship, and that with brothers
Whose life doth mine to nobler tasks allure.

I worship one, Him, only God, adoring,
To whom heaven's hosts their endless homage pay;
I follow one, His guidance safe imploring,
Who said to all who seek, "I am the way."

Thus worshipping, believing, loving, hoping,
Though oft in devious paths alone I've trod,
I find that still, with all true souls, I'm groping
Towards one bright centre in the love of God.

C. A. HUMPHREYS.

TEACH US TO WAIT!

WHY are we so impatient of delay,
Longing forever for the time to be?
For thus we live to-morrow in to-day,
Yea, sad to-morrows we may never see.

We are too hasty; are not reconciled
To let kind nature do her work alone;
We plant our seed, and like a foolish child
We dig it up to see if it has grown.

The good that is to be we covet now,
We cannot wait for the appointed hour;
Before the fruit is ripe we shake the bough,
And seize the bud that folds away the flower.

When midnight darkness reigns we do not see
That the sad night is mother of the morn;
We cannot think our own sharp agony
May be the birth-pang of a joy unborn.

Into the dust we see our idols cast,
And cry, that death has triumphed, life is void!
We do not trust the promise, that the last
Of all our enemies shall be destroyed!

With rest almost in sight the spirit faints,
And heart and flesh grow weary at the last;
Our feet would walk the city of the saints,
Even before the silent gate is passed.

Teach us to wait until thou shalt appear—
To know that all thy ways and times are just;
Thou seest that we do believe and fear,
Lord, make us also to believe and trust!

PHEBE CAREY.

I HEARD a pouting little maid,
In childhood's dewy morn,
Lamenting that the rose was stemmed
Upon a cruel thorn.

I saw a sweet-faced mother,
In life's hushed, evening hour,
Smile, grateful that the thorns were crowned
With such a glorious flower.

A. C. ROBERTS.

TIRED MOTHERS.

A LITTLE elbow leans upon your knee,
Your tired knee, that has so much to bear;
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly
From underneath a thatch of tangled hair.
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet touch
Of warm, moist fingers, folding yours so tight;—
You do not prize this blessing over-much,
You almost are too tired to pray to-night.

But it *is* blessedness! A year ago
I did not see it as I do to-day,—
We are so dull and thankless; and too slow
To catch the sunshine till it slips away.
And now it seems surpassing strange to me,
That, while I wore the badge of motherhood,
I did not kiss more oft, and tenderly,
The little child that brought me only good.

And if, some night when you sit down to rest,
You miss this elbow from your tired knee;
This restless, curling head from off your breast,
This lisping tongue that clatters constantly;

If from your own the dimpled hands had slipped,
And ne'er would nestle in your palm again;
If the white feet into their grave had tripped,
I could not blame you for your heart-ache then!

I wonder so that mothers ever fret,
At little children clinging to their gown;
Or that the footprints, when the days are wet,
Are ever black enough to make them frown.
If I could find a little muddy boot,
Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber floor;
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
And hear its patter in my home once more;—

If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
To-morrow make a kite, to reach the sky—
There is no woman in God's world could say
She was more blissfully content than I.
But ah! the dainty pillow next my own
Is never rumpled by a shining head;—
My singing birdling from its nest is flown;
The little boy I used to kiss is dead!

LIGHT ON THE MOUNTAIN-TOPS.

In Alpine valleys, they who watch for dawn
Look never to the east; but fix their eyes
On loftier mountain-peaks of snow, which rise
To west or south.
Before the happy morn
Has sent one ray of kindling red, to warn
The sleeping clouds along the eastern skies
That it is near—flushing, in glad surprise,
These royal hills, for royal watchmen born,
Discover that God's great new day begins,
And, shedding from their sacred brows a light
Prophetic, wake the valley from its night.
Such mystic light as this a great soul wins,
Who overlooks earth's wall of griefs and sins,
And steadfast always, gazing on the white
Great throne of God, can call aloud with deep,
Pure voice of truth, to waken them who sleep.

H. H.

TIME TO GO.

THEY know the time to go!
The fairy clocks strike their inaudible hour
In field and woodland, and each punctual flower
Bows at the signal an obedient head
And hastes to bed.

The pale Anemone
Glides on her way with scarcely a good-night;
The Violets tie their purple night-caps tight;
Hand clasped in hand, the dancing Columbines,
In blithesome lines,

Drop their last courtesies,
Flit from the scene, and couch them for their rest;
The Meadow Lily folds her scarlet vest
And hides it 'neath the Grasses' lengthening green,
Fair and serene.

Her sister Lily floats
On the blue pond and raises golden eyes
To court the golden splendor of the skies.
The sudden signal comes, and down she goes
To find repose

In the cool depths below.
A little later, and the Asters blue
Depart in crowds, a brave and cheery crew;
While Golden Rod, still wide awake and gay,
Turns him away,

Furls his bright parasol,
And, like a little hero, meets his fate.
The Gentians, very proud to sit up late,
Next follow. Every Fern is tucked and set
'Neath coverlet,

Downy and soft and warm.
No little seedling voice is heard to grieve
Or make complaints the folding woods beneath;
No lingerer dares to stay, for well they know
The time to go.

Teach us your patience, brave,
Dear flowers, till we shall dare to part like you,
Willing God's will, sure that His clock strikes true,
That His sweet day augurs a sweeter morrow,
With smiles, not sorrow.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

SOME MURMUR.

SOME murmur when their sky is clear,
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful love are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild
The darkness of their night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied.
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.

R. C. TRENCH.

THE WOUNDED CURLEW.

By yonder sandy cove where, every day,
The tide flows in and out,
A lonely bird in sober brown and grey
Limps patiently about;

And round the basin's edge, o'er stones and sand,
And many a fringing weed,
He steals, or on the rocky ledge doth stand,
Crying, with none to heed.

But sometimes from the distance he can hear
His comrades' swift reply;
Sometimes the air rings with their music clear,
Sounding from sea and sky.

And then, O then his tender voice, so sweet,
Is shaken with his pain,
For broken are his pinions strong and fleet,
Never to soar again.

Wounded and lame and languishing he lives,
Once glad and blithe and free,

And in his prison limits frets and strives
His ancient self to be.

The little sandpipers about him play;
The shining waves they skim,
Or round his feet they seek their food, and stay
As if to comfort him.

My pity cannot help him, though his plaint
Brings tears of wistfulness;
Still must he grieve and mourn, forlorn and faint,
None may his wrong redress.

O bright-eyed boy! was there no better way
A moment's joy to gain,
Than to make sorrow that must mar the day
With such despairing pain?

O children, drop the gun, the cruel stone!
O listen to my words,
And hear with me the wounded curlew moan—
Have mercy on the birds!

C. THAXTER.

NEW YEAR HYMN.

SUNLIGHT of the heavenly day,
Mighty to revive and cheer!
Bless our yet untrodden way,
Lead us through the entered year.
Where the shades of death we see,
Let Thy living brightness be;
Let it speed our lingering feet;
Let it shine on all we meet.

Forward, though our path be hid,
Though we pass the lurking foe,
Though the sound of war forbid,
Girt with gladness, let us go;
Bold in Thy protecting care,
Strong to prove Thee faithful there,
Through the desert or the sea,
On, to find our home in Thee.

Open Thou beneath our tread
Springs, the distance could not show;
From the holy fountain-head
Let them rise where'er we go:

Rather, give us eyes to see,—
Love, awake to love in Thee;
Hearts that, trusting to Thy care,
Find its traces everywhere.

In the shadow of Thy hand
We can brave the uprooting gale,
And a little child may stand
Where the soldier's heart would fail;
When the stormy wind is heard,
Quick to every tender word;
And for all our journey's length
Armed with meekness more than strength.

Oft a desolating blast
Bears the seed of comfort too,
And the patient soul at last
Finds a garden where it blew;
So, where nothing cheers our sight,
Germs of love may spring to light.
Bright 'mid earth's oppressive shades,
Fresh beside the leaf that fades.

A. L. WARING.

WEDDED LOVE.

And if the husband or the wife,
In home's strong light discovers
Such slight defects as failed to meet
The blinded eyes of lovers,

Why need we care to ask? Who dreams
Without their thorns, of roses;
Or wonders that the truest steel
The readiest spark discloses?

For still in mutual sufferance lies
The secret of true living;
Love scarce is love that never knows
The sweetness of forgiving.

J. G. Whittier.

CENTENNIAL ODE.

An Hundred Years! And Nature never old,
Still, day by day, orders her myriad works.
The sun rolls on in flaming splendor, from
Air and earth and water, calling forth the
Innumerable mysteries of life;
The moon gilds grassy slope and wild ravine
And restless sea; all the stars of heaven
Rise and set and rise again; rivers flow,
Bringing the drift and pebbles from the far
Snow-mantled mountains; ocean's bosom swells
And sinks; the seasons change; and all moves on
As in the years gone by.

A Century
In the long ages of Creation's course,
Is but the flash of passing bird, the swing
Of pendulum, the ripple of a wave.
Ten thousand thousand years has Nature's force
Transformed the elements, and carrying on
A vast, diversified, ordainéd plan,
Prepared this home for occupation;
Has embellished it with beauties countless
As the glittering sands on Afric's desert.

And still through ages numberless to come
Will silent, slow, unerring energy
Work out new loveliness for coming man.
Wild hurricanes will sweep o'er earth; her face
Will seem all scarred and torn and bleeding;
To the imperfect vision Chaos reigns:
Yet all is part of one grand scheme for good,
As earth puts on her fairest robe of green,
Bedecked with jewels, after summer storm.

But where are those who on the day which we,
With patriot instinct, celebrate, fulfilled
Their varied duties! The venerable
Sires long since have rested from their labors;
The stalwart men and noble mothers gave
Their life-work to their kind, and sank to sleep;
The babe became a busy, boisterous boy,
Or romping girl with merry sparkling eye,
And by degrees assumed the cares of life,
And toiled and mourned and smiled, then it too slept.
All who looked abroad that day on Nature,
Now rest beneath the swelling grassy waves
Of their last home.

But yet to us they live!
Man passes to his rest and *seems* to die

And be forgotten, but his *deeds* remain.
The learnéd tell us that there is no waste
Of force in Nature's wise economy—
That every motion is but vital power
Coeval with the origin of things.
So every act of kindness, every word
Of love, each gentle ministering to
The wants and pains and sorrows of our kind,
Live in a gentler race, a nobler line.
A virtuous and chivalric father,
A mother true to noble womanhood,
Leave in successive ages far remote
Traces of goodness and undying worth.
No life so humble but it makes its mark
For good or ill, but helps to shape in slight
Degree, the form and manners of the age,
As grain by grain the tiny insect rears
The coral continents in tropic seas.

What is the lesson then for us to learn,
In looking through the long array of years
That stretch in hazy distance down the Past?
Is it not to gird the armor of true
Manhood, energy and faith upon us,
Not satisfied to idly drift along
The stream of life, but taking up our work

Acknowledge each is debt to country, race?
Nobly we commemorate the virtues
Of ancestral worth, by honest actions,
By elevated thoughts, by purer lives,
By gentle courtesy, by liberal deeds,
By earnest trust in virtue, valor, truth.

Altho' at times the outlook o'er the world
Is darkened by the prevalence of wrong;
Altho' the anxious heart grows faint and sick
While waiting the approach of brighter day;
Altho' the lover of his race well nigh
Despairs of man's regeneration; yet
As certain as the light of coming dawn,
Is progress to a higher, better life.

He who has watched from lofty mountain peak
The eddying of the mist that shrouds the vale,
Knows that its tossings mark a plastic power
That soon shall mould to drifting, fleecy clouds,
The exhalations from the marshy shore:
So shall the light of coming ages show
Beneath the faults and errors of to-day,
A glorious heritage of Truth and Good.

The past returns no more! With Hope and Trust
We face the future, striving for the best,
And so we offer to the coming years,
The era that begins to-day our Hymn.

Hail! O new and happy time!
Welcome to this world of ours!
Welcome to the Winter's rime!
Welcome to the Summer flowers!

Tho' no mortal eye may scan
All the threads of joy and sorrow,
That diversify thy plan
As thou greetest each to-morrow;

Tho' the eyes that sparkle now,
Ere thy close may shut forever,
Tho' the fair, the manly brow,
Gain the wreath that fadeth never;

Calmly in this thought we'll rest
While we humbly give thee greeting—
All is ordered for the best,
Thus the woof of life completing.

As the ages roll away,
Other forms in turn will meet thee,
Fairer scenes, a brighter day,
Nobler races still will greet thee!

HENRY C. HALLOWELL.

THE MOUNTAIN RILL.

ONE morn we took a mountain ride, and as we climbed the hill,
We came upon a level spot, where our tired horse stood still.
The sun had not yet peeped above the hill-top crowned with trees,
And graceful ferns that edged the path, waved in the morning breeze.

From out the rock, a little rill stole down with noiseless flow,
And careful hands had placed a spout, and rustic trough below;
Which, ever full, detained it not, but as it overflowed,
It watered all the herbage round, then stole across the road.

We drank and rested—musing thus,—How vain is
human pride!
Man cannot bid the spring gush forth from out the
mountain side;
As powerless to command one drop of that diviner
stream,
Which whoso drinks of, all beside but muddy waters
seem.

How sweet the lesson taught us by the little mountain
rill,
Man may provide the reservoir, but God alone can
fill.

S

"MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND."

PSALMS xxxi, 15.

FATHER, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me,
And the changes that are sure to come,
I do not fear to see;
But I ask Thee for a present mind
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And to wipe the weeping eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.

I would not have the restless will,
That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know;
I would be treated as a child,
And guided where I go.

Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts,
To keep and cultivate;
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait.

So I ask Thee for the daily strength
To none that ask denied,
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side;
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified.

And if some things I do not ask
In my cup of blessing be,
I would have my spirit filled the more
With grateful love to Thee;
More careful, than to serve Thee much,
To please Thee perfectly.

There are briers besetting every path,
That call for patient care,
There is a cross in every lot,
And an earnest need for prayer;
But a lowly heart that leans on Thee
Is happy anywhere.

In a service which Thy will appoints,
There are no bonds for me;
For my inmost heart is taught "the truth"
That makes Thy children "free";
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty.

A L. WARING.

BEGINNING AGAIN.

WHEN sometimes our feet grow weary
On the rugged hills of life,
The path stretching long and dreary
With trial and labor rife,
We pause on the upward journey,
Glancing backward o'er valley and glen,
And sigh with an infinite longing
To return and "begin again."

For behind is the dew of the morning,
With all its freshness and light,
And before are doubts and shadows
And the chill and gloom of the night;
And we think of the sunny places
We passed so carelessly then,
And we sigh, "O Father, permit me
To return and begin again."

We think of the many dear ones,
Whose lives touched ours at times,
Whose loving thoughts and smiles
Float back like vesper chimes;

And sadly remember burdens
We might have lightened then,
Ah! gladly would we ease them,
Could we "begin again"!

And yet how vain the seeking!
Life's duties press us on;
And who would shrink from the burden,
Or sigh for the sunshine that's gone?
And it may be, not far before us
Wait fairer places than then;
Our paths may lead by still waters,
Though we may not "begin again."

Yes, upward and onward forever
Be our path on the hills of life!
But ere long a radiant dawning
Will glorify trial and strife;
And our Father's hand will lead us
Tenderly upward then—
In the joy and peace of the better world
He'll let us "begin again."

MORE LIFE.

Not weary of thy world
So beautiful, O Father, in thy love,
Thy world, that, glory lighted from above,
Lies in thy hand impearled;

Not asking rest from toil;
Sweet toil that draws us nearer to thy side;
Ever to tend thy planting satisfied,
Though in ungenial soil;

Not to be freed from care,
That lifts us out of self's lone hollowness;
Since unto thy dear feet we all may press,
And leave our burdens there;

But O for tireless strength!
A life untainted by the curse of sin,
That spreads no vile contagion from within;
Found without spot at length.

For power and stronger will,
To pour out love from the heart's inmost springs;
A constant freshness for all needy things;
In blessing, blessed still!

O to be free, heart-free
From all that checks the right endeavor here!
To drop the weariness, the pain, the fear,
To know death cannot be!

More life! the life of heaven!
A perfect liberty to do thy will;
Receiving all from thee, and giving still,
Freely as thou hast given!

LUCY LARCOM.

NOT KNOWING.

I KNOW not what will befall me! God hangs a mist
o'er my eyes;
And o'er each step of my onward path he makes new
scenes to rise;
And every joy he sends me comes as a sweet and glad
surprise.

I see not a step before me as I tread the days of the
year;
But the Past is still in God's keeping; the Future his
mercy shall clear;
And what looks dark in the distance may brighten as
I draw near.

For perhaps the dreaded Future has less bitter than I think;
The Lord may sweeten the water before I stoop to drink;
Or, if Marah must be Marah, he will stand beside its brink.

It may be he is waiting for the coming of my feet,
Some gift of such rare blessedness, some joy so strangely sweet,
That my lips can only tremble with the thanks I cannot speak.

O restful, blissful ignorance! 'Tis blessed not to know!
It keeps me quiet in those arms which will not let me go,
And hushes my soul to rest on the bosom which loves me so.

So I go on, not knowing! I would not if I might;
I would rather walk in the dark with God, than go alone in the light;
I would rather walk with him by faith than walk alone by sight.

My heart shrinks back from trials which the Future
may disclose,
Yet I never had a sorrow but what the dear Lord
chose;
So I send the coming tears back, with the whispered
word, "He knows."

PRAISE.

PRAISE costs thee nothing; yet to say "well-done"
To him who hath "well done" indeed is meet;
Such words of praise make life itself more sweet
To every faithful worker who hath won
The right to thine approval. Grudge not praise
Lest thou defraud thy brother of his dues;
Yet do not seek mere honeyed words to use
To gain him for thy purposes or ways
Not for his benefit. Keep on thy mind
The Golden Rule of Christ, and thou wilt find
Thou canst approve of e'en the humblest deed
That seeks to satisfy some human need
With generous intent. Oh, strive to be
Ready with kind, appreciative word,
To every one whose sympathies are stirred

To sweet activities, and thou wilt see
Good everywhere abounds, and grow more bold
To speak that praise thy lips cannot withhold,
With eloquence of love that doth not wait
For prejudice of caste, profession, creed,
But weighs the man by honest worth of deed,
And to speak truth dares never hesitate.
Perhaps some word of thine, like good seeds cast
Into the soil of life, may at the last
Bear glorious fruit in some achievement vast.

CHARLES EDWARD PRATT.

GOD.

O, THOU eternal One! whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all motion guide;
Unchanged through time's all-devastating flight;
Thou only God! There is no God beside.
Being above all beings; Mighty One;
Whom none can comprehend, and none explore;
Who fill'st existence with thyself alone;
Embracing all—supporting—ruling o'er—
Being whom we call God—and know no more!

In its sublime research, philosophy
May measure out the ocean deep—may count
The sands, or the sun's rays—but, God! for Thee
There is no weight, nor measure; none can mount
Up to Thy mysteries. Reason's brightest spark,
Though kindled by Thy light, in vain would try
To trace Thy counsels, infinite, and dark;
And thought is lost, ere thought can soar so high,
E'en like past moments in eternity.

Thou from primeval nothingness didst call
First chaos, then existence.—Lord, on Thee
Eternity had its foundation:—all
Sprung forth from Thee:—of light, joy, harmony
Sole origin: all life, all beauty Thine.
Thy word created all and doth create;
Thy splendor fills all space with rays divine.
Thou art, and wert, and shalt be; glorious, great,
Life-giving, life-sustaining Potentate!

Thy chains the unmeasured universe surround:
Upheld by Thee, by Thee inspired with breath:
Thou the beginning with the end hast bound,
And beautifully mingled life and death;
As sparks mount upwards from the fiery blaze,
So suns are born; so worlds spring forth from Thee.
And, as the spangles in the sunny rays

Shine round the silver snow, the pageantry
Of heaven's bright army glitters in Thy praise.

A million torches, lighted by Thy hand,
Wander unwearied through the blue abyss;
They own Thy power, accomplish Thy command,
All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss.
What shall we call them? Piles of crystal light,
A glorious company of golden streams,
Lamps of celestial ether, burning bright—
Suns, lighting systems with their joyous beams?
But Thou to these art as the noon to night.

Yes, as a drop of water in the sea,
All this magnificence in Thee is lost!
What are ten thousand worlds compared to Thee?
And what am I then? Heaven's unnumber'd host,
Though multiplied by myriads, and array'd
In all the glory of sublimest thought,
Is but an atom in the balance, weigh'd
Against Thy greatness—is a cypher brought
Against infinity! What am I then? Naught.

Naught; But the effluence of Thy light divine,
Pervading worlds, hath reach'd my bosom too;
Yes; in my spirit doth Thy spirit shine,

As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.
Naught; but I live, and on hope's pinions fly
Eager towards Thy presence; for in Thee
I live, and breathe, and dwell; aspiring high,
E'en to the throne of Thy divinity.

I am, O God! and surely Thou must be:
Thou art! directing, guiding all, Thou art!
Direct my understanding, then, to Thee;
Control my spirit, guide my wandering heart.
Though but an atom midst immensity,
Still I am something fashion'd by Thy hand!
I hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and earth,
On the last verge of mortal being stand,
Close to the realms where angels have their birth,
Just on the boundaries of the spirit-land!

The chain of being is complete in me,—
In me is matter's last gradation lost:
And the next step is spirit—deity!
I can command the lightning, and am dust;
A monarch and a slave; a worm, a god.
Whence came I here? and how so marvelously
Constructed, and conceived?—Unknown. This clod
Lives surely through some higher energy;
For, from itself alone, it could not be.

Creator, yes; Thy wisdom and Thy word
Created me: Thou source of life and good:
Thou spirit of my spirit, and my Lord.
Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plenitude,
Fill'd me with an immortal soul to spring
O'er the abyss of death, and bade it wear
The garments of eternal day, and wing
Its heavenly flight beyond this little sphere,
E'en to its source—to Thee—its author there.

O thoughts ineffable! O vision blest!
Though worthless our conceptions all of Thee,
Yet shall thy shadow'd image fill our breast,
And waft its homage to Thy Deity.
God, thus alone my lowly thoughts can soar,
Thus seek Thy presence, Being wise and good!
Midst Thy vast works admire, obey, adore;
And, when the tongue is eloquent no more,
The soul shall speak in tears of gratitude.

DERZHAVIN.

Translated from the Russian by John Bowring.

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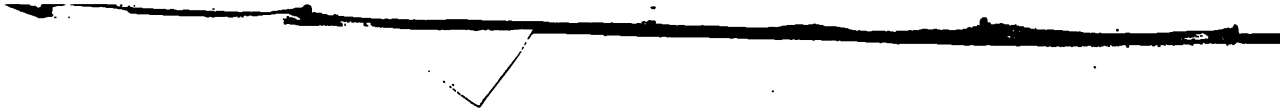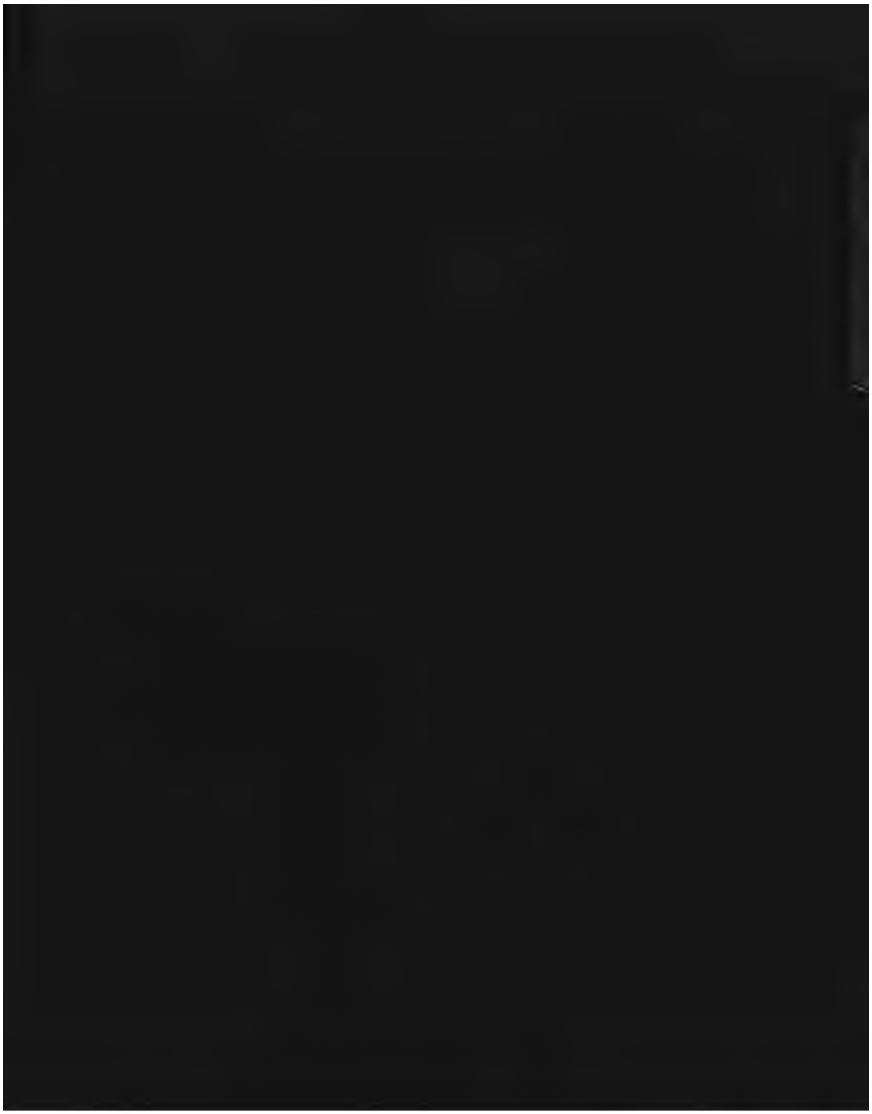
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